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ILLUSTRATED
HISTORY
OF
ENGLAND.

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JOHN CASSELL'S

ILLUSTRATED

HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

The Text, to the Reign of Edward II.

BY J. F. SMITH;

AND FROM THAT PERIOD BY WILLIAM HOWITT.

VOL. I.

FROM THE EARLIEST PERIOD TO THE REIGN OF EDWARD THE FOURTH.

With upwards of Three Hundred Engravings.

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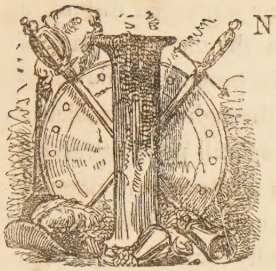
PREFACE.



IN the success which has attended CASSELL'S ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF ENGLAND appears the most satisfactory proof that such a Work was wanted, and that the Publishers have been enabled to realise their views in embarking in so great an undertaking. To present a complete History of our Nation and People, at the price of one penny per week, and that embellished by an abundance of bold and spirited Illustrations, is, they conceive, an enterprise second to none as it regards the diffusion of sound intelligence and just principles amongst the mass of our countrymen. England has played a more important part than any nation in the annals of the world. Independent of the military fame achieved, and the immense territories over which this country has extended its dominion, which neither Assyrian, Greek, nor Roman, which neither Alexander of Macedon nor Napoleon of France can equal in long-continued glory and wide-extended magnificence, it has been the august mission of Great Britain, under Providence, to exhibit the principles of human government in their most exalted form. We have planted colonies and pitched our standards on every side of the globe. India—with its hundred and fifty millions of people—owns our sway; North America, including the United States, Nova Scotia, and Canada, with their more than thirty millions of inhabitants, is the offspring of England, and the heir of its literature and free institutions. Africa and Australia are rapidly renewing her image on a larger scale in the southern hemisphere. We look in vain to any nation which can point to deeds, to creations, and to triumphs like these: and the question then immediately presents itself, through what causes this grand panorama of glory and of human blessings has thus been constructed? We answer, unquestionably, by our ancestors having, with many faults and failings, held fast, in the main, to the sublime doctrines of Truth, Justice, and Humanity, the emanations from the Divine Lawgiver of the Universe, as they are presented to us in the Bible.

Standing unflinchingly up to that standard, our fathers have dared to correct the errors of the Church and the State whenever they threatened the freedom or the welfare of the public. They have framed their constitutions and their charters, and have compelled the proudest monarchs to accept and rule by them. Where they found a dynasty which refused this reasonable control, they did not hesitate to arraign a king of that race for his high treason to the people, and made him a solemn spectacle to all lands and ages. They went further; and that dynasty failing to recognise the great lesson intended, they put it finally away, and called in another prince who was willing to acknowledge, in the Bill of Rights, that "all Power proceeds from the People."

It is from these national deeds and demonstrations, from these teachings of the great science of government, that the whole civilised world is now aiming at its own reorganisation. It is from these principles, made practical and perpetual on the theatre of Great Britain, that all Declarations of Independence, revolutions, and free constitutions have flowed, and will continue to flow, through ages, wherever men begin to reflect on their rights and their destinies.

Well, in writing a History, we are but tracing these great events, these great principles of

national action. We are depicting to the People what their fathers have done, and often died for; and what they are bound, by every incentive of gratitude and of religion, to do for the coming ages.

If the People are to be qualified to discharge faithfully this great trust to posterity, they must be made acquainted with all that has been doing amongst their forefathers. It is in this view of the subject that a wide circulation of such a History amongst the People becomes a most important fact. That fact impresses on our minds the necessity of rendering the national transactions faithfully, and placing in the most prominent light the great truths which live in them.

In the period over which we have already passed, though the events appear somewhat distant in time, they have been full of interest. The mingling of different races to form the one great race of England; the acquisition of Magna Charta; the growth of literature and art; the progressive development of the authority of Parliament and the laws, have gleamed brilliantly through the conflict of swords and the mere contentions for the Crown. We are now rapidly approaching still more attractive ground. The Reformation is fast dawning upon us; the grand conflict between arbitrary and popular power in the Commonwealth; the triumph of Free Institutions, and the glorious outburst of free mind, of a newer and profounder philosophy, and a magnificent literature, are rapidly approaching. We shall every day, more and more, be called upon to stand in the presence of illustrious statesmen, undaunted patriots, sagacious lawgivers, great commanders on sea and land, and an array of orators, poets, and philosophic writers,

Beyond all Greek, beyond all Roman fame.

The growing fascinations of the subject must necessarily draw after them the minds of all lovers of their country. Whilst we detail the transactions of the past, we shall be unfolding the origin of every institution, opinion, and principle amongst which we are existing, and by which we are guided in the present day; and shall confidently calculate on the lively sympathy of our readers, especially when, as we have already done by Magna Charta, we shall be able to place certain *great epochs* in a much truer and more popular light.

The reader will bear in mind that the text of this History down to the end of the reign of Edward I. is from the pen of J. F. Smith, and from that period by William Howitt.

ILLUSTRATIONS TO THE FIRST VOLUME.

PAGE

FRONTISPIECE—Boadicea
The Druids Inciting the Britons to Oppose the Landing of the Romans... 1
Druidical Remains at Carnac, in the Department of Morbehan, France 3
Stonehenge (restored) 4
Druidical Monuments (restored) at Abury, Wiltshire 5
A Caledonian, or Pict 6
Landing of Julius Cæsar 7
Julius Cæsar. From a Cameo in the Imperial Library, Paris 10
A Group of Ancient Britons 12
Roman Soldiers passing over a Bridge of Boats 13
Roman Architecture in Britain: Capital—Masonry at Colchester—Cornice, Basement, Doorway at Bird-Oswald 18
The Treaty of Peace between the Saxon Leaders and the British King 19
Sections of the Wall of Richborough Castle 20
Coin 21
Coins Struck during the Roman Period in England... 21
The Piratical Invasion of the Saxons under Hengist and Horsa 22
Roman Urns 23
Saxon Arms 24
Defeat of the Saxons by Arthur 25
Egbert 27
Alfred the Great... 30
The Murder of Cenulph, King of Wessex ... 31
Alfred in the Neatherd's Hut... 34
Massacre of Christian Priests by the Danish Invaders... 36
Athelstan's Ring... 36
The Ecclesiastical Council convened by St. Dunstan... 37
Edwy dragged by Dunstan from the Presence of Elgina... 42
Edgar the Pacific rowed down the River Dee by Eight Tributary Princes... 43
Drawing of the Crucifixion. Harl. MS. ... 46
Assassination of Edward the Martyr... ... 48
The Sister of King Sweyn murdered in the General Massacre of the Danes by the Saxons, A.D. 1002 49
Danish Arms and Armour 51
Meeting of Edmund Ironside and Canute in the Isle of Alney 54
Canute reproving his Courtiers 55
——— the Great... 58
Harold swearing to maintain the Right of the Duke of Normandy to the Throne of England... 60
The Death of Hardicanute 61
William, Duke of Normandy 66
The Shrine of Edward the Confessor, in Westminster Abbey 67
Building of the Tower of Babel. Saxon MS. 69
SAXON ARCHITECTURE: Tower of Sompting Church—Window of Deerhurst Church—Window of Jarrow Church—Doorway of Barnack Church 71
——— Tower of Earl's Barton Church ... 72
Anglo-Saxon Calendar... ... ...73, 76
A Saxon Blacksmith 77
Saxon Bell... 77
Execution of a Criminal. Saxon MS. ... 78
Saxon Calendar 78
At a Banquet given by Harold, he receives the News of the Invasion of the Normans 79
Saxon Game at Bowls 80
Anglo-Saxon Vessel 81
Ruins of Hastings Castle 84
The Battle of Hastings 85
The Norman Thanksgiving after the Battle of Hastings 87
William the Conqueror... 89
Finding of the Body of Harold 90
Coronation of William the Conqueror ... 91
Arms of William the Conqueror 92
Silver Penny and Great Seal of William the Conqueror 93
Rougemont Castle, Exeter 94
Battle Abbey 96

PAGE

View of Lincoln, showing the Ruins of the Castle 97
Plan of a Norman Castle 98
Clifford's Tower, York 99
Depopulation of Hampshire to form the New Forest 102
William the Conqueror and his Son Robert... 103
——————— arrests with his own Hand Odo, Bishop of Bayeux 105
William II., surnamed Rufus 108
The Death of Conan 109
William Rufus and the Soldier 111
Statue of William Rufus in the Choir of York Cathedral 113
Bamborough Castle 114
Pope Urban II. preaching the First Crusade 115
Roman Model representing the Palm Tree of Judea 117
St. Helena discovering the True Cross. Greek MS. 118
The Army of Peter the Hermit 120
Bird's-eye View of Christian Constantinople 121
Statue of Godfrey of Bouillon at Brussels ... 123
Marble Column raised by Arcadius at Constantinople 125
Throne of the Emperor of Constantinople. Greek MS. 126
Santa Sophia 127
Circus and Hippodrome of ancient Constantinople... 128
Costume of an Empress of Constantinople. Greek MS. 129
Crown of an Empress of Constantinople. From an Arab Medal... 129
Movable Tower 131
Sword of Godfrey of Bouillon... 131
Tomb of Godfrey of Bouillon 131
Templars 132
The Death of William Rufus 133
Fragment of a Copy of the Evangelists, in Latin. Tenth Century 135
——————— of an Ode to Mecænas. Tenth Century 135
Anglo-Saxon Writing of Sixth Century ... 135
Latin Papyrus of Third Century 136
Saxon Dinner Party. Cotton MS. 136
Gleemen Juggling Ditto 137
Balancing... 137
Musical Instruments. Caedmon MS.... ... 137
Dance. Ninth Century 138
Grand Organ 138
Norman Costumes of Eleventh Century ... 139
Harp. Ninth Century 140
Ladies Hunting. Royal MS. 140
Hawking. Cotton MS. 140
Umbrella used in Hawking 140
Harold. From the Bayeux Tapestry... ... 140
Training the Falcon 141
Sword Play 141
Bob Apple... 141
Saxon Crowns 141
Anglo-Saxon Costume 142
——————— Shoes 142
Ladies' Costume 142
Cloak-pin, Buckle, and Pouch. Twelfth Century... 142
Anglo-Saxon Dinner-party 142
Chairs, Candlestick, Saxon Bed 143
Norman Vessel. Twelfth Century 143
Comb in Ivory 143
Military Costumes. Twelfth Century ... 144
Gisarme—Norman Soldiers and Bowmen ... 144
Woman Spinning 145
Noble Ladies of Normandy 145
Sacramental Wafer-box 145
Bayeux Tapestry... 147
Great Seal of Henry I. 149
Robert of Normandy at the Castle of the Count of Conversano... 150
Marriage of Henry I. and Matilda 151
Statue of Henry I. in the Choir of York Cathedral 152
Henry I. 154
Robert of Normandy a Prisoner in Cardiff Castle 156
Matilda, Queen of Henry I. 157

PAGE

Shipwreck of Prince William, Son of Henry I. 159
King Henry bewailing the Loss of his Children... 160
Stephen 162
The Battle of the Standard 163
Silver Penny of Stephen 164
Signature and Seal of Pope Innocent II. ... 164
Great Seal of Stephen 165
Effigy of Roger, Bishop of Sarum, in Salisbury Cathedral 166
Stephen taken Prisoner... 168
The Empress Matilda and the Queen of Stephen 169
Revolt of the Citizens of London against Matilda 171
Statue of Stephen in the Choir of York Cathedral 173
Flight of Matilda from Oxford... 174
Meeting of Stephen and Prince Henry at Wallingford 175
Statue of Henry II. in the Choir of York Cathedral 176
Great Seal of Henry II. 177
Silver Penny, Henry II. 177
Henry II. 178
Entry of Henry and Eleanor into Winchester 180
The Pope conducted by the Kings of France and England 181
Progress of Thomas à Becket through France 186
Defeat of the English by the Welsh at Berwin 187
Murder of Thomas à Becket 190
Henry II. doing Penance at the Tomb of Thomas à Becket 192
Siege of Waterford. The City taken by Assault 193
Spoon of 12th Century, used at the Coronation of the Kings of England 196
Meeting of Henry and Louis on the Plain near Gisors 198
Penance of Henry before the Shrine of Thomas à Becket. From an ancient painting on glass 199
Effigy of Eleanor, Queen of Henry II. ... 203
Richard Cœur-de-Lion drawing his Sword on the Cardinal-Legate of the Pope ... 204
Richard Cœur-de-Lion beside the Dead Body of his Father 205
NORMAN ARCHITECTURE:—
Norwich Castle 207
Hedingham Castle, Essex 207
Early Norman Capital 208
St. James's Tower, Bury St. Edmunds 209
St. Botolph's Priory 209
Portion of a Doorway, Durham Cathedral 209
Richard I. Cœur-de-Lion 210
Massacre of the Jews at the Coronation of Richard I. 211
Crown of the 12th Century 212
Statue of Richard I. in York Cathedral ... 212
Shield of a Templar 213
View of part of the Town of Genoa. From an ancient Engraving 214
Medals of William I. or William II. of Sicily 214
Isaac of Cyprus praying Cœur-de-Lion for the Restoration of his Daughter 217
Plan of Acre in the 14th Century 219
Machine for Throwing Stones, used at the Siege of Acre 221
"Save the Holy Sepulchre" 222
Richard Cœur-de-Lion at Jaffa 223
Coins of Sovereigns of the Seljuk Dynasty ... 225
Richard Cœur-de-Lion 226
The Bishop of Salisbury before Saladin ... 228
Richard Cœur-de-Lion surprised by the Austrian Soldiers 229
Longchamp the Chancellor arresting Hugh Pudsey, Bishop of Durham 231
Richard Cœur-de-Lion before the Diet of the German Empire 234
John kneeling for Forgiveness before his brother Richard 235
The Death of Longbeard 240

PAGE

Richard Cœur-de-Lion receiving his Death-wound 241
Effigies of Richard I. and Berengaria ... 243
Great Seal of King John 245
The Death of Prince Arthur 246
John and the Jew of Bristol 247
King John... 252
John kneeling in Homage before the Pope's Legate 253
John refusing to sign Magna Charta ... 258
Rage of John after the signing of Magna Charta 259
Specimen of the writing of Magna Charta ... 260
Dover Castle 264
John's Passage of the Wash 265
Great Seal of Henry III. 267
Henry III. and the Earl of Pembroke ... 270
The Barons enforcing their Rights from Henry III. 271
Henry III. 278
The Battle of Taillebourg 282
Interior of Westminster Hall—the Bishops pronouncing Sentence of Excommunication against all who should oppose the Charter 283
London-bridge in the Thirteenth Century—Escape of Queen Eleanor 289
Henry III. at the Battle of Lewes 291
Combat between Prince Edward and Baron Adam Gourdon 294
Circular part of the Temple Church, London 295
ARCHITECTURE OF THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY: Capital, Salisbury Cathedral—Capital, Lincoln Cathedral—Tooth Ornament, Lincoln Cathedral 299
——— South Transept of Beverley Minster 300
Departure of Edward and Eleanor to the Holy Land 301
Great Seal of Edward I.... 303
Tomb of Henry III. in Westminster Abbey 306
Edward I. presenting his Infant Son to the Welsh 307
Edward I. 312
Baliol doing Homage for the Crown of Scotland 313
Earl Warenne displaying his Title to his Estates 318
Edward I. at Berwick 319
Origin of the War between France and England 324
Quarrel between Edward I. and the Earls of Norfolk and Hereford... 325
Death of Comyn 330
Wallace crowned with Laurel in Westminster Hall... 331
Carlisle Castle 334
Tomb of Eleanor, Queen of Edward I., in Westminster Abbey 336
Piers Gaveston 337
Great Seal of Edward II. 339
Edward II.... 342
Surprise of Edinburgh Castle 343
The Battle of Bannockburn 349
Berkeley Castle 352
Deposition of Edward II. 353
Great Seal of Edward III. 358
Edward III. 360
Reception of Philippa of Hainault at London 361
Mortimer's Hole, Nottingham Castle ... 366
The Troops of Lord Montacute in the Subterranean Passage 367
The Battle of Sluys 375

PAGE

Genoese Bowman 375
Edward the Black Prince 378
Combat between French and English Cavalry at the Passage of the Somme 379
Queen Philippa interceding for the Burgesses of Calais 385
Edward the Black Prince presenting King John of France to his Father Edward III. 390
The Battle of Poictiers 391
Combat between English and French Knights in a square at Limoges 397
The Death of Edward III. 403
Great Seal of Richard II. 407
Richard II. 408
The Widow of the Black Prince appealing to Wat Tyler for Protection from the Mob 409
John of Gaunt 414
Wycliffe appearing before the Prelates at St. Paul's to answer the Charge of Heresy ... 415
Death of Wat Tyler 421
John Wycliffe 426
Richard II. asserting his Authority 427
Betrothal of the French Princess to Richard II. 432
Arrest of the Duke of Gloucester 433
Combat between the Earls of Norfolk and Hereford stopped by the King 438
Meeting of Richard and Lancaster at Flint Castle 439
Pontefract Castle 442
A Scandinavian God 445
Shipping of the Year 1269 447
Prior of Southwick's Chair. 13th Century ... 448
Parliament assembled for the Deposition of Richard II. Harl. MS. 450
Siege of a Town in the 14th Century ... 451
King and Armour-bearer. 13th Century ... 452
Ciborium. 13th Century 453
Crozier. 13th Century... 453
Costume of a Bishop of the 14th Century ... 454
Effigy of Jocelyn, Bishop of Salisbury ... 454
Fac-simile of Part of a Page of Wycliffe's Bible 455
Author and Copyist Writing 456
Roger Bacon 457
Matthew Paris 459
Geoffrey Chaucer... 462
The Queen's Cross, Northampton 463
DECORATED ARCHITECTURE :—
Building of St. Alban's Abbey. Cotton MS. 464
Window, from Meopham 465
——— St. Mary's, Beverley 465
Decorated Capital, from Selby 466
Ball-flower 466
Four-leaved Flower 466
Dance of Fools 467
Ruins of Croyland Abbey 468
Edward II. and the Minstrel 469
Dancing Bears and Monkey. Harl. MS. ... 470
Woman Churning and Blind Beggar... ... 471
Blacksmith of 14th Century 471
Penny of Edward I. 473
——— (supposed) of Edward II. 473
Great of Edward III. 473
Bed of the 13th Century 474
Effigy of Matilda Fitzwalter at Dunmow ... 474
English Merrymaking in the 14th Century... 475
Abbot's Chair. 13th Century... 476
Pilgrim, 13th Century 476
Stocks. Do. 476
Saddle of the Time of Edward II. 476

PAGE

King at Table. 14th Century... 477
Shoes of the Time of Edward II. 478
Tilting Helmet found at Lynn. 13th Century 478
Mourning Costumes of the 13th Century ... 479
Head-Dresses of the Time of Henry III. ... 479
Stool-ball. 14th Century 480
Card-Playing. Do. 480
Horsemen Tilting. 12th Century. Royal MS. 480
Henry IV. 481
Great Seal of Henry IV. 483
Owen Glendower's Oak 487
The Return of the Douglas across the Border 487
Restoration of Isabella to her Father ... 493
The Field of the Battle of Shrewsbury ... 495
The French Fleet reaching Milford Haven... 498
Execution of the Archbishop 499
Judge Gascoigne 502
Reconciliation of the Dukes of Burgundy and Orleans 505
Owen Glendower... 510
Judge Gascoigne and Prince Henry 511
Tomb of Henry IV. and his Queen in Westminster Abbey... 513
Great Seal of Henry V.... 516
Henry V. 517
Cradle of Henry V. 518
Room in the Lollards' Tower 519
French Carpenter and Maid Servant... ... 522
The Battle of the Carpenters and Butchers... 523
Parliament of Henry V. Harl. MS.... ... 524
Azincourt—King Henry V. and the Sire de Helly 529
Ruins of Monmouth Castle 534
Reception of Sigismund on the Coast of England... 535
The Mass in the Abbey Church of Marmontier 541
Rouen 546
Cardinal Ursini's Visit to Henry V. 547
Armour of Fifteenth Century—Great Hall at Brougham Hall 552
Assassination of the Duke of Burgundy ... 553
Tomb of Henry V. in Westminster Abbey ... 555
Paris in the Fifteenth Century 558
Funeral Procession of Henry V. 559
Great Seal of Henry VI. 564
Henry VI.... 565
The Duke of Brabant driving away the Ladies of his Wife Jacqueline 567
Cardinal Beaufort's Chantry, Winchester Cathedral 570
Joan of Arc 571
——— at the Assault of the Tournelles ... 577
Burning of Joan of Arc... 582
Death of Cardinal Beaufort 583
Queen Margaret, from a tapestry in St. Mary's Hall, Coventry 589
The Tower of London 594
Death of the Earl of Shrewsbury 595
Siege Operations (15th Century); a French town taken by the English 600
Richard Duke of York claiming the Crown 601
Edward IV. 606
Queen Margaret and the Robber of Hexham 607
Great Seal of Edward IV. 608
First Meeting of Edward IV. and Lady Elizabeth Gray 613
Preaching at St. Paul's Cross. 15th Century 618
Warwick visiting King Henry VI. in the Tower 619

CASSELL'S
ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

THE TEXT BY J. F. SMITH.

THE DRUIDS INCITING THE BRITONS TO OPPOSE THE LANDING OF THE ROMANS.

CHAPTER I.

The First Inhabitants of Britain—The several Nations and Tribes who settled there—Variety of States—The Druids: their System—Social and Moral Condition of the Britons.

SEPARATED from the continent of Europe by the sea, Britain seems to have been but imperfectly known to the historians of antiquity. Herodotus, who wrote 450 years before Christ, is supposed to have included it amongst the Cassiterides, a group of islands lying off the coast of Cornwall, better known as the Scilly Isles. Aristotle, a century later, speaks of Albion and Ierne. Strabo, the cotemporary of Cæsar, informs us that the Phœnicians carried on a considerable commerce with the Cassitĕrides, where they obtained lead, tin, and skins; and that, so jealous were they lest any other nation should participate in the advantages of the trade, the captain of one of their ships, finding himself pursued by several Roman galleys, sent to discover the island, purposely led them on a shoal of rocks, rather than betray the route, and suffered shipwreck with them. His countrymen compensated him for his loss.

Pliny has recorded the name of the navigator who first brought lead from the Cassiterides:—

"Plumbum ex Cassiteride insulâ primus apportavit Midacritus."
Hist. Nat.

Most writers have agreed that Britain was first peopled by the Gauls, or, more properly speaking, the Celtæ, who came over from the neighbouring continent; and adduce the identity of language, government, and religion of the two nations in support of their opinion. As population increased, the inhabitants of the island gradually became divided into a variety of tribes or states, each having a separate chief; who was far, however, from exercising a despotic power, unless in time of war; in peace, the supreme authority, as is frequently found amongst barbarian nations, was vested in their Druids or priests, who combined with the sacerdotal office the offices of legislator and judge.

The historians of antiquity commonly give the name of Celts to the greater part of the inhabitants of Central and Western Europe. Two distinct peoples have been confounded under it, both in Gaul and Britain—the race of Gael, and that of the Cimbri.

The irruption of the Scythians, which occurred seven centuries before the Christian era, dispersed the Cimbri. Vast hordes of the latter nation settled in the countries between the Lower Danube and the mouth of the Elbe, and, in course of time, invaded a great part of Gaul. According to tradition, the first of the race who settled in Britain was named Hu the Cadarn, or Hu the Powerful. Another chief, named Prydain, son of Aed the Great, came over at a later period, and being a great legislator, as well as a warrior, gave his name to the entire island, since corrupted into Britain.

Whitaker, in his "History of Manchester," contends that the island derives its name from the Celtic root, Brit, which signifies broken or separated, in allusion to the inhabitants being divided into so many different tribes or nations. Many fierce contests, doubtless, ensued before the Cimbri succeeded in establishing their authority; but that they did succeed in doing so, there can be no reasonable doubt. The Gaels gradually submitted to their yoke, although they still continued to form the most important part of the population.

Many other bands of emigrants succeeded: amongst others the Belgæ (a people of Gaul, but of German origin), who landed on the southern coast, and gradually extended themselves over the country comprised between the Thames, the Severn, and the sea.

Thus we see that the inhabitants of the island were composed of different tribes and nations. The most ancient at the time of Cæsar's expedition were—

The Silures, established on the borders of the Severn. They had extended their authority over the Ordovices and Dimetæ. The country inhabited by these three races comprises the Principality of Wales.

The western part of the island, as far south as the Bristol Channel, was inhabited by the Damnonii, a colony of whom afterwards settled in Gaul, and gave the name of the country they quitted to La Basse Bretagne. The western coast was occupied by the Belgæ.

On the left bank of the Thames were the Trinobantes, a comparatively weak race, but celebrated for having laid the foundation of London; which was so insignificant a place in the time of Cæsar, that he does not condescend to mention it in his Commentaries.

Between the Trinobantes and the Silures were the Atrĕbātes, originally from Artois; the Dobuni; and the Cassii, whose renowned chief, Cassibelan, was the leader of the confederated tribes and nations against Cæsar and his legions.

From the country of the Trinobantes to the Wash, the eastern coast was occupied by the Iceni; the Cor Iceni were settled between the Wash and the Humber.

The Cornaveans inhabited the west, and from the Humber to the Tyne existed the Brigantes, the most powerful of the nations which inhabited Britain; they were divided into several confederate states, and renowned for their fierceness in war.

Between the Cor Iceni and the Brigantes were the Parīsii.

From the north of the Tyne to the plains which form the Lowlands of Scotlands, were five nations known as the Maætæ. The fierce and savage tribes, inhabitants of the highlands, were comprised under the general name of Caledonians.

Such were the various people and tribes designated in the time of Cæsar as Britons; a motley population, preying on each other, savage as the wilds in which they dwelt; depending for existence on their flocks and herds, or the spoils of war and the chase; the country was little better than a wilderness, having neither roads nor canals, and so thickly covered with wood that but little space was left for cultīvation.

The form of goverment in the island was as divided as the races which inhabited it. In the south the monarchical form generally prevailed; whilst the patriarchal system predominated in the north amongst the Gaels, where the chief of each tribe and the heads of families on their own domains exercised sovereign authority, always subjected, however, to the influence of the Druids, who were regarded with the most profound veneration by all classes of the people.

The religion of the Druids was dark and mysterious as the gloomy forests in which it first drew birth, and in whose deepest recesses they celebrated their cruel rites. From time immemorial it had existed amongst the Gaels, who introduced it into Britain when they first settled in the island

Its ministers built no covered temples, deeming it an insult to their gods to attempt to enclose their emblems in an edifice surrounded by walls and erected by mortal hands; the forest was their temple, and a rough, unhewn stone their altar. They worshipped Tecanus, another name for Jupiter, the god of thunder; Mercury and Mars, under the appellation of Teutates and Hesus; Apollo, whom they designated Belēnus; Diana, as Arduine; and Andate, the goddess of Victory.

Besides these—who may be regarded as their superior deities—they had a great number of inferior ones. Each wood, fountain, lake, and mountain had its tutelary genius, whom they were accustomed to invoke with sacrifice and prayer. The priests of this terrible idolatry were divided into three separate orders, under the command of a chief, who was elected for life, whose power was unlimited, and who alone was suffered to pronounce the fearful sentence of excommunication, which deprived the victim of sacerdotal wrath of all civil rights.

The first of these divisions consisted, properly speaking, of Druids only; they were the interpreters of the laws, which they never permitted to be committed to writing; the instructors of youth, and the judges of the people,—a tremendous power to be lodged in the hands of any peculiar class, but doubly dangerous when the ignorance, cruelty, and superstition of the race they tyrannised over are duly considered.

The second class, the Eubates, may be looked upon in the light of the working clergy; they were charged with the sacrifices and divinations. The last and inferior division was those of the Bards, whose duty it was to preserve in verse the memory of any remarkable event; to celebrate the triumph of their heroes; and, by their exhortations and songs, excite the chiefs and people to deeds of courage and daring on the day of battle.

It is impossible not to be struck by the profound cunning which presided over the organisation of this tremendous priesthood, which concentrated all authority in its hands. Its ministers placed themselves between man and the altar, permitting his approach only in mystery and gloom. They wrought upon his imagination by the sacrifice of human life, and the most terrible denunciations of the anger of their gods on all who opposed them. As the instructors of youth, they moulded the pliant mind, and fashioned it to their purpose; as the judges of the people, there was no appeal against their decisions, for none but the Druids could pronounce authoritatively what was the law, there being no written code to refer to; they alone possessed the right to recompense or punish: thus the present and future welfare of their followers alike depended upon them.

The severest penalty inflicted by the Druids was the interdiction of the sacrifice to those who had offended them.

Druidical Remains at Carnac, in the Department of Morbehan, France.

Woe to the unhappy wretch on whom the awful sentence fell! He ceased to be considered a human being. Like the beast of the forest his life was at the mercy of any one who chose to take it. He lost all civil rights, and could neither inherit land or sue for the recovery of debts; every one was at liberty to spoil his property; even his nearest kindred fled from him in horror and aversion as from the pest.

With such a tremendous weapon at their command, no wonder the Druids were all powerful. We have since seen it used, in comparatively modern times, by the ministers of a purer and more enlightened faith with a similar effect.

It is now time to give some account of the dogmas of this extinct superstition, once the general faith of Britain. Like the monks of the middle ages, the Druids of the higher orders lived in community in the remote depths of the vast gloomy forests, where they celebrated their rites. In

these retreats they initiated the youthful aspirants for the sacerdoce, who frequently passed a novitiate of twenty years before being admitted. Disciples of all ranks flocked to them, despite the severity of the probation, tempted, no doubt, by the honours and great privileges attached to the order, amongst which, exemption from every kind of taxation and servitude was not the least.

The Druids taught the immortality of the soul, and its transmigration from one body to another, till by some extraordinary act of virtue or courage it merited to be received into the assembly of the gods.

Cæsar, in his Commentaries, informs us that they instructed their pupils in the movements of the heavenly bodies, and the grandeur of the universe. Their knowledge of mathematics must have been considerable, since we find it applied to the measurement of the earth and stars. In mechanics they were equally advanced, judging from the monuments which remain to us.

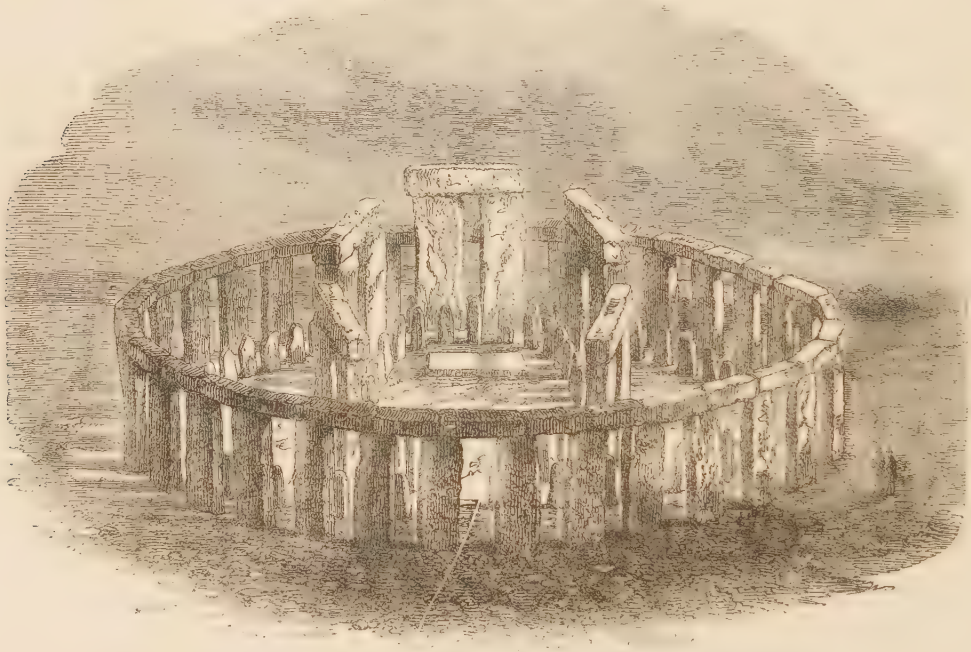
They knew something of botany and medicine, but mingled with the latter certain magical and superstitious practices.

Of the secret tenets of the order, which were communicated only to the initiated, little positive is known.

The following curious inscription, found in the neighbourhood of Metz, prove that the Celts believed in visions, and the phenomena of magnetism.

SILVANO
SACR
ET NYMPHIS LOCI
ARETE DRUIS
ANTISTITA
SOMNO MONITA
D.

Such was the institution of Druidism, on which so many opinions have been expressed. To judge it properly the reader must not lose sight of the epoch in which it flourished; that cruelty and superstition were, before the Christian era, the common errors of mankind. Would we could add that they had disappeared from the world under a better dispensation.



Stonehenge (restored).

Of these the most remarkable in England are Stonehenge, consisting of 139 enormous stones, ranged in a circle; and that of Abury, in Wiltshire, which covers a space of 28 acres of land. But the largest of all the Druid temples is situated at Carnac, in the department of Morbehan, in France. It is formed of 400 stones, varying from five to twenty-seven feet in height, and ranged in eleven concentric lines.

It is difficult to say precisely from what source the Druids drew their doctrines, which have a striking affinity with those of Pathagoras and the sages of the East; probably it was from the latter they borrowed them. It was not the least singular of their dogmas, that the earth which we inhabit had passed through—and was still to experience—a variety of changes, but would never be destroyed.

The sacrifice of human victims was one of the great sins of antiquity. The Romans, with all their boasted civilisation, offered to the avenging gods the blood of their prisoners. It was the triumph of Christianity to abolish such impious rites.

Thus much may fairly be said in defence of the Druids. Unlike the Brahmins of India, they had not the presumption to give themselves out as the descendants of a race divine; none were excluded from their order, to which merit and long study alone gave access; and they held, with the sages of antiquity, that the government of nations belonged of right to the wisest amongst them.

Ancient writers have transmitted but little information touching the morals and customs of the Britons. Cæsar, Pomponius Mela, and Diodorus Siculus speak of them with undisguised contempt. The former concluded, doubtless, from some isolated facts, that the community of women was a general usage in the island. This is one of his greatest errors, since it is proved that marriage was established amongst the principal nations of Britain, particularly the Celts, who exacted a rigorous chastity in their wives. They treated them with a respect which could only have existed amongst a people where marriage elevated woman to a level with man. They frequently submitted to be governed by the widows of their kings, who in more than one instance conducted them to battle.

The inhabitants of the island in the time of Cæsar lived in a very primitive state, depending for support upon their flocks and herds; their houses were of the rudest description—a species of cabin formed of the bark of trees and thatched with grass; and their cities consisted of a number of these cabins ranged without order and surrounded by a deep ditch or fosse.

The costume of the ancient Britons was equally primitive, being made from the spoils of the chase. These skins, Tertullian informs us, in preparing for war, they were accustomed to throw off, and display with pride their tall muscular bodies, tattooed in a variety of devices.

They were a handsome, athletic race, wearing their hair long and the moustache upon the upper lip; and, scanty as their numbers were, might have bid defiance to the Romans or any other invaders, had they not been divided by intestine broils and factions.

Such was the country and such the condition of its inhabitants when Cæsar undertook its conquest; to which he was led—not so much by the thirst of dominion, as by the necessity he found himself under of doing something to acquire a name which at Rome might balance that of Pompey. He had already partially subdued the Gauls, and determined on subjecting Britain.

Having decided on the expedition, the victorious general commenced his preparations with his accustomed energy His first care was to obtain hostages from the Gauls; he questioned the merchants and others who had visited Britain as to its resources and extent, the natives which inhabited it, their manners, customs, and religion, and sent Comius, whom he had created King of the Atrabates in Gaul, to demand the submission of the islanders.

On the first news of the intended descent, the Britons, excited by the Druids and Bards, assembled in arms, in order to defend their coasts, but at the same time did not neglect other means of warding off the danger which threatened their independence, and despatched ambassadors to Cæsar with offers of alliance. They were received courteously, although the wily Roman knew that, incited by their priests, they had arrested his messenger, and kept him in chains. Meanwhile Cæsar prepared his fleet and assembled his soldiers for the expedition.

Druidical Monuments (restored), at Abury, Wiltshire.

CHAPTER II.

The Landing of the Romans—Battle with the Britons—Defeat of the latter—They sue for Peace, which is granted—Privations of the Invaders—The War breaks out again.

Cæsar embarked the infantry of two of his legions in eighty vessels, which he assembled at Itius-Portus, supposed by some writers to be Calais, by others, the village of Wessant, between that place and Boulogne. He divided the vessels amongst his principal officers, and set sail with a favourable wind during the night. Eighteen galleys at a distant part of the coast had received his cavalry, and sailed

about the same time. At ten the following morning the expedition appeared off the coast, where the inhabitants appeared in arms ready to receive it. The spot, it would seem, was unfavourable for landing, and, for the first time in his life, Cæsar hesitated, and dropped anchor till three in the afternoon, hoping the arrival of his other galleys. Disappointed in his expectation, he sailed along the coast, and finally decided on disembarking at Deal, where the shore was comparatively level, and presented less difficulty for such an enterprise. But here, too, the Britons were prepared, a considerable force being collected to oppose him.

The galleys drew too much water to permit the invaders to land at once upon the beach, and the soldiers hesitated. There was a momentary confusion amongst them.

"Follow me, comrades!" exclaimed the standard-bearer, "if you would not see the eagle in the hands of the enemy. For myself, if I perish, I shall have done my duty to Rome and to my general."

At these words he plunged into the waves, and was followed by the men, who leaped tumultuously after him, ashamed, most likely, of their previous cowardice and hesitation. On reaching the shore, they fell with the utmost fury on the enemy, whose undisciplined ranks could ill sustain the shock of the Roman legion; still they fought desperately, excited by their bards and priests, who sang the songs of victory, and exhorted them to renew the combat each time they seemed to waver.

We can easily imagine the cool steadiness of the Romans, the fiery courage, mingled with terror and surprise, of the Britons at finding themselves exposed to men armed and disciplined in so novel a manner. Desperate acts of devotion, doubtless, were not wanting amongst them. At last they were compelled to give way, and retreat to the shelter of the woods, with their chariots and broken ranks. Cæsar himself informs us that he was prevented from pursuing the victory by the absence of his cavalry; a circumstance which he bitterly laments, since its presence alone was wanting to crown his fortune.

A Caledonian, or Pict.

Although it does not appear that he ventured to follow the fugitives, the victory must have been complete, seeing they sent ambassadors, accompanied by Comius, whom the Britons released from his prison and chains to sue for peace. The victor complained, and with some show of justice, of the reception he had met with, after they had sent envoys to him in Gaul with offers of submission, and the arrest of his ambassador, and lamented the blood that had been shed.

To this harangue the Britons artfully replied that they had imprisoned Comius, in order to preserve him from the fury of the people, and with this excuse Cæsar either was or affected to be content. He granted the peace they came to solicit, and demanded hostages, which were promised, for the future.

It is not to be supposed that an all powerful, and, in this instance, a patriotic priesthood, like the Druids, would patiently permit their influence to be annihilated, and the institutions they had established with so much care destroyed by a mere handful of invaders, who had barely obtained a landing place on the coast of the island. In the deepest recesses of the gloomy forests which they

inhabited, fearful rites were doubtless celebrated. Human victims poured forth their blood on Odin's altar; oracles were delivered, and omens seen, calculated to rouse the transport the cavalry of Cæsar, and drove them back upon the coast of Gaul. This was not the only misfortune the Romans endured. That same night the moon was at its full,

Landing of Julius Cæsar.

courage of the vanquished Britons, and excite them once more to take arms against the enemy, whose position became anything but a secure one.

A storm dispersed the eighteen galleys which were to it was the season of the equinox, and the tide rose to an unusual height, filling the vessels which Cæsar had drawn out of the reach of danger, as he imagined, on the sands. The larger ships, which had served him as a means of

transport, were driven from their anchors, and many of them wrecked.

Although perfectly aware of the perils which menaced their invaders, the Britons appear to have proceeded with the utmost caution. Whilst a league was secretly being formed to crush them, their chiefs appeared daily in their camp, professing unbroken friendship.

The Britons, who had secretly collected their forces, fell suddenly upon the seventh legion, which had been sent to a distance to forage. The plan was well contrived to defeat the enemy in detail. Many of their leaders remained in the neighbourhood of the camp, in order to lull suspicion, whilst their confederates surprised the Romans, who—having laid aside their arms—were soon surrounded, and must have been cut off but for the timely arrival of Cæsar, who, warned by his outposts that a cloud of dust thicker than usual had been seen at a distance, guessed immediately what had occurred. With a portion of his army he fell upon the assailants, and, after a desperate struggle, disengaged the threatened legion, and returned with it to the camp in safety. The lesson was a sharp one, and the rains soon afterwards setting in, the invader did not attempt to renew the battle.

The islanders, meanwhile, had not been idle: messengers had been despatched in every direction, calling on the various nations to take arms; the Druids preached war to the death; and a sufficient force was soon assembled to attack the Romans in their camp. Discipline, however, again prevailed against the courage of the barbarians, as Tacitus contemptuously calls them; although he admits at the same time their bravery, and adds that it was a fortunate thing for Cæsar that the country was so divided into petty states, and that the jealousies of their respective rulers prevented the unity of action which alone could ensure success. Had the Britons been united, they might have bid defiance to the legions of Rome.

Once more the islanders demanded peace, which Cæsar granted them; in fact, he was scarcely in a position to do otherwise, for he already meditated a retreat. He embarked his army suddenly in the night, and retired to Gaul, taking the hostages he had received with him.

Although the senate at Rome ordered a thanksgiving of twenty days for the triumph of the Roman arms, the first expedition against the island cannot be regarded in any other light than a failure. For the second invasion, preparations were made commensurate with the importance of the task proposed.

Cæsar having assembled eight hundred vessels, on board of which were five legions, and two thousand horsemen of the noblest families in Gaul, set sail, and landed without opposition once more at Ryde. This time there was no enemy to oppose him; for the Britons, terrified at the appearance of this immense armament, had retreated to their natural fastnesses, the forests.

Leaving ten cohorts and three hundred horsemen to guard the camp and fleet, under the orders of Quintus Atrius, Cæsar set forward in search of the enemy, whom he discovered, after a march of twelve miles, on the banks of a river, where they had drawn up their chariots and horsemen. Profiting by their elevated position, they accepted, or rather engaged, the combat.

The shock must have been terrible, for we find that it was near night when the battle ended. The Britons, as usual after a defeat, retreated once more to their woods, where it was impossible for the legions of Rome to follow, or the cavalry to act against them.

On the following morning, just as the victorious leader was about to recommence his march, news arrived from the camp that a violent tempest had seriously damaged the fleet. Many of his vessels were wrecked, and others rendered unfit for service.

Like a prudent general, Cæsar at once returned to the camp to assure himself of the extent of the injury done to his fleet, and found it more considerable than he imagined. Forty vessels were lost; the rest could be repaired, though not without great labour and time. Every artificer in his army was set to work; others were sent for from the continent; and instructions written to Labienus in Gaul to construct new galleys to replace those which were lost.

The next step was worthy of the genius and reputation of Cæsar. After having repaired his ships, he caused his legions to draw them out of reach of the tide high upon the shore, and enclosed the whole of them in a fortified camp; an immense work, when we consider that it was executed in an enemy's country, and the scanty means at his command for such an undertaking.

The gigantic task performed, he set forth once more in search of the confederate Britons.

It would fill a volume to detail, step by step, the progress of the Romans; to describe battle after battle, and treaties, which were no sooner made than broken. The success of the invaders increased.

The kingdom of Cassibelan was overrun, and that heroic monarch compelled to submit and sue for peace, through the Comius who had formerly been his captive.

Cæsar, wishing to pass the winter in Gaul, where he feared a rebellion against his authority, granted the request, and, after imposing an annual tribute upon Britain, and exacting hostages from the inhabitants, took his departure for the continent.

Cæsar cannot be said to have conquered the island. It is true that, wherever he encountered the natives in battle, his armies were victorious; but he made no permanent settlement; and when the state of Britain is considered, the desperate courage of the people, the absence of roads and means of communication, the reasons will appear plain.

In Rome the progress of the invasion was watched with intense anxiety, and more than one classic writer has borne witness to the bravery of the ancient Britons. Cicero, in his letter to his friend Trebatius, then serving in the army, warns him against being surprised by the chariots of the Britons; and, in another portion of his correspondence, the illustrious orator says:—

"I learn there is neither gold nor silver in Britain; try, therefore, to take some chariot of war, and return quickly amongst us."

To Atticus he writes:—

"We are expecting the termination of the war in Britain We know that there is neither gold nor silver in the island, nor any hope of bringing back plunder, unless it be slaves."

Rome, in fact, gained nothing by the enterprise, Cæsar everything; it enhanced his military reputation, increased his popularity with the people, and earned him the love of his soldiers.

For nearly a century after the invasion of Cæsar, Britain remained in a state of independence. Some of its princes

there is every reason to believe, paid tribute to Rome, but the number must have been few. Augustus several times declared his intention of reducing the island to obedience, but never made any attempt to do so; the empire, he said, was already too large, and he found it convenient to forget Britain.

Caligula afforded the world a pitiful spectacle of madness of power. He assembled an army on the coast of Gaul and embarked on board the imperial galley, from whence he issued orders to commence the attack against an imaginary enemy. Afterwards he informed his astonished legions that they had conquered the sea, and commanded them to gather up the shells upon the shore, the spoils of their bloodless victory, for which he afterwards decreed himself the honours of a triumph in Rome.

Claudius, his successor, resolved on a regular invasion of the island, and in the 43rd year of the Christian era he despatched four legions, with their auxiliaries, under the command of Aulus Plautius, an excellent general, who surprised the Britons by the rapidity of his movements. They rallied, however, under their leaders, Togodumnus and Caractacus, two brothers: the latter, by his heroic resistance and dignity in misfortune, acquired a fame imperishable.

The Britons, having drawn the invaders into a marshy part of the country, fell upon them with great fury, and many were destroyed. This news induced Plautius to retreat as far as the right bank of the Thames, and to write to Claudius, inviting him to pass over to the island and conclude the war himself. The emperor accepted the invitation and took the command of his legions in Britain. He crossed the Thames, and seized upon the fortress of Camalodunum — Colchester or Malden, authorities are divided as to which—receiving in his progress the submission of a number of petty kings and chiefs.

Having reduced a part of the country to the condition of a Roman province, Claudius returned to enjoy the honours of a triumph in Rome. It was celebrated with a degree of unusual magnificence, splendid games, and rejoicings. The Emperor mounted the steps of the Capitol on his knees, and decorated his palace with a naval crown, in token of his victory over the sea.

The provinces voted him wreaths; the senate, annual games, a triumphal arch, and the glorious surname of Britannicus. This last honour was accorded to his infant son, whom he was in the habit of bearing in his arms, in view of the people; and who was predestined to so tragical a death.

Vespasian, while yet the lieutenant of Aulus Plautius, acquired great glory against the Belges; he conquered the Isle of Wight and the southern portion of the island.

After passing four years on the island, Plautius was recalled to Rome, where the jealousy of the emperor limited the honours decreed to the victorious general to a simple ovation. He was succeeded by Ostorius Scapula, who found, on his arrival, the affairs of his countrymen in the greatest disorder.

The Britons, trusting that a general newly arrived in the island would not enter on a campaign in the beginning of winter, had divided their forces, to plunder and lay waste the territories of such persons as were in alliance with Rome. Ostorius, however, contrary to their expectations, pursued the war with vigour, gave the dispersed bands no time to unite or rally, and commanded the people whom he suspected of disaffection to give up their arms.

As a further precaution, he erected forts on the banks of the Avon and the Severn. The Iceni and the Brigantes finally submitted to the yoke.

The moment appeared favourable to the victorious general to subdue the Silures, a fierce and warlike nation, who, under the guidance of their king, Caractacus, still held out against the Roman arms. Hitherto clemency and force had alike proved unavailing to reduce them to submission, and Ostorius prepared his expedition with a prudence and foresight worthy of the struggle on which the establishment of the supremacy of Rome on the island in a great measure depended. He first settled a strong colony of his veteran soldiers at Camalodunum, on the conquered lands, to keep in check the neighbouring tribes, and spread by their example a knowledge of the useful arts. He then set forth at the head of his bravest legions in search of Caractacus, who had retreated from his own states, and transported the war into the country of the Ordovices.

The warlike Briton had assembled under his command all who had vowed an eternal resistance to the invaders, and fortified his position by entrenchments of earth in imitation of the Roman military works.

In Shropshire, where the great struggle is supposed to have taken place, there is a hill which the inhabitants still call Caer Caradoc. It corresponds exactly with the description which Tacitus has given of the fortifications erected by Caractacus, and answers to the Latin words *Castra Caractaci*.

The warrior, whose devotion to the liberties of his country merited a better fate, did all that a patriot and a soldier could do to excite the spirit of his countrymen. He reminded the chiefs under his command that the day of battle would be the day of deliverance from a degrading bondage, and at the same time appealed to their patriotism by reminding them that their ancestors had defeated the attempts of Cæsar.

The address was received with acclamation, and the excited Britons bound themselves by oaths not to shrink from the darts of their enemies.

The cries of rage with which the invaders were received, the resolute bearing of the Silures, astonished the Roman general, who examined with inquietude the river which defended the rude entrenchment on one side, and the ramparts of earth and stone, not unskilfully thrown up; and the rugged rock, which towered above them, crowned with numberless defenders. His soldiers demanded to be led to the contest, urging that nothing was impossible to true courage; the tribunes held the same language, and Ostorius led on his army to the attack. Under a shower of arrows it crossed the river and arrived at the foot of the rude entrenchment, but not without suffering severely.

Then was seen the advantage of discipline over untrained courage. The Roman soldiers serried their ranks, and raising their bucklers over their heads, formed with them an impenetrable roof, which securely sheltered them whilst they demolished the earthworks. That once accomplished, the victory was assured. The half naked Britons, with their clubs and arrows, were no match against the well-armed legions of Rome; they retreated slowly, but from the summit of the rocks still poured death upon their enemies

till the light troops succeeded in slaying or dispersing them.

The victory of the Romans was complete. The wife and daughter of Caractacus were taken prisoners; and the illustrious chief of the Silures soon afterwards shared a similar destiny. His mother-in-law, Cartismunda, queen of the Brigantes, to whom he had fled for shelter, delivered him in chains to his enemies.

Ostorius sent him and his family to Rome, as the noblest trophies of his conquest.

The fame of Caractacus had penetrated even to Italy; the Roman citizens were anxious to behold the barbarian who had so long braved their power. Although defeated and a captive, the natural greatness of his soul did not abandon him. Tacitus relates that his first remark on beholding the imperial city was surprise that those who possessed such magnificent palaces at home, should envy him a poor hovel in Britain.

The British chief was conducted before the Emperor Claudius, who received him seated on his throne, with the Empress Agrippina by his side. The prætorian guard were drawn up in line of battle on either side.

First came the servants of the captive prince; then were borne the spoils of the vanquished Britons; these were followed by the brothers, the wife, and daughter of Caractacus, and last of all Caractacus himself, calm and unsubdued by his misfortunes.

Advancing to the throne he pronounced the following remarkable discourse, which history has consecrated:—

"If I had had, O Cæsar, in prosperity, a prudence equal to my birth and fortune, I should have entered this city as a friend, and not as a captive; and possibly thou wouldst not have disdained the alliance of a man descended from illustrious ancestors, who gave laws to several nations. My fate this day appears as sad for me as it is glorious for thee. I had horses, soldiers, arms, and treasures; is it surprising that I should regret the loss of them? If it is thy will to command the universe, is it a reason we should voluntarily accept slavery? Had I yielded sooner, thy fortune and my glory would have been less, and oblivion soon have followed my execution. If thou sparest my life, I shall be an eternal monument of thy clemency."

It is impossible not to be struck by the great dignity as well as simplicity of this address. It was complimentary without meanness, and truthful without exaggeration.

To the honour of Claudius, he not only spared the life of his captive, but the lives of his brothers, wife, and daughter, and treated him with all honour. Their chains were removed, and they expressed their thanks, not only to the Emperor, but to Agrippina, whose influence is sup-

Julius Cæsar. (From the large Cameo representing the Apotheosis of Augustus, and known as the Agate de la Sante Chapelle preserved in the Collection of Medals of the Imperial Library, Paris.)

posed, not without reason, to have been exerted in their favour.

The public life of Caractacus ended with his captivity; for the tradition that he afterwards returned to Britain, and ruled over a portion of the island, rests on so uncertain a foundation, as to be unworthy of belief. Had fortune afforded him a wider field for the exercise of his genius, he would have bequeathed a more brilliant, but not a nobler name to history.

The senate, in its pompous harangues, compared the subjection of this formidable chief to that of Syphax by Scipio, and decreed the honours of a triumph to his conqueror Ostorius.

Ostorius was succeeded in the government of Britain by Avitus Didius Gallus, who, unlike his warlike predecessor, sought to establish the Roman dominion in the island by fomenting internal dissension. He made an alliance with the perfidious mother-in-law of Caractacus, Cartismunda, queen of the Brigantes, whose subjects had revolted. His government lasted but four years, during which period the armies of Rome made but little progress on the isle.

The monster Nero, who succeeded by crime to the throne, assigned the government of Britain to Veranius, who died a year afterwards, in a campaign he had undertaken against the Silures.

His successor, Suetonius Paulinus, proved himself fully equal to the task he had undertaken. Hitherto the Britons had been excited to revolt by the exhortations of the Druids, whose principal sanctuary was in the island of Anglesea, which, up to the period of his government, had preserved its independence, and served as a refuge to the malcontents and vanquished. Of this important spot Suetonius resolved to obtain possession, as the most effectual means of crushing the spirit of resistance still existing amongst the people.

By means of a number of flat-bottomed boats, which he had constructed for the purpose, he crossed the arm of the sea which separates Anglesea from Britain.

Tacitus has left a vivid description of the effect produced upon the Romans on approaching the island. The army of the enemy drawn up like a living rampart on the shore to oppose their landing; the priestesses in mournful robes of a sombre colour rushing wildly along the sands, brandishing their torches and muttering imprecations; the Druids, with their arms extended in malediction. The invaders were appalled; and, but for the exhortations of their leaders, the expedition, in all probability, must have suffered a defeat. Excited by their reproaches, the standard-bearers advanced, and the army, ashamed to desert their eagles, followed them, striking madly with their swords, and crushing all who opposed them. Finally, they succeeded in surrounding the Britons, who perished, with their wives and children, in the fires which the Druids had commanded to be kindled for their hideous sacrifices.

This victory was a terrible blow to the influence of the Druids, who never recovered their power in the island; and its consequences would have been more severely felt, but for an insurrection which shortly afterwards broke out in that part of Britain which had been reduced to the condition of a Roman colony.

The imposts were excessive, and exacted with rigour. Hundreds of distinguished families saw themselves reduced to indigence, and, consequently, to servitude. Their sons were torn from their hearths, and compelled to serve on the continent in the auxiliary cohorts. All these evils, great as they were, might have been borne, had not an outrage been added more infamous than any the insolent invaders had yet ventured to perpetrate: an outrage which filled the hearts of the Britons with fury, and drove them once more to rebellion.

Prasutagus, a king of the nation of the Iceni, had for many years been the faithful ally of Rome; on his death, the better to ensure a portion of his inheritance to his family, he named the Emperor and his daughters as his joint heirs. The Roman procurator, however, took possession of the whole in the name of his imperial master, a proceeding which naturally aroused the indignation of Boadicea, the widow of the deceased prince. Being a woman of resolute character, she complained bitterly of the spoliation, and for redress was not only beaten with rods like a slave, but her daughters were dishonoured before her eyes.

On hearing of these indignities, the Iceni flew to arms; the Trinobantes and several other tribes followed their example, and a league was formed between them to recover their lost liberties.

The first object of their attack was the colony of veterans established at Camalodunum, where a temple, dedicated to Claudius, had been raised, the priests of which committed infamous exactions, under the pretence of honouring religion.

It was affirmed, as is generally the case on the eve of any great event, that numerous omens preceded the catastrophe. The statue of Victory fell in the temple with its face upon the ground; fearful howlings were heard in the theatre; and it is even pretended that a picture of the colony in ruins had been seen reflected in the waters of the Thames.

The report of all these prodigies, which, if they really took place, were doubtless the contrivances of the Druids, froze the veterans with terror, and raised the courage of the Britons to the highest pitch. In the absence of Suetonius, the colonists demanded succour of the procurator, who sent them only two hundred men, and those badly armed; and with this feeble reinforcement, the garrison shut themselves up in the temple.

With the cunning which seems peculiar to all semi-barbarous nations, the Britons continued to reassure their enemy of their pacific intentions. The consequence was, that instead of raising a rampart and digging a ditch round the building, which they might easily have done, the Romans remained in a state of fancied security, neglecting even to send away their women and children, and such as from age and sickness were unable to bear arms.

Suddenly the mask was thrown off. The insurgents, who had gained sufficient time to collect their forces and mature their plans, fell upon the colony, destroying everything before them, and sparing neither sex nor age. After a siege of several days, the temple was taken by assault, and the garrison put to the sword.

Emboldened by their success, the victors marched to meet Petillius Céréalis, who, at the head of the ninth legion, was hastening to the assistance of his countrymen. After a bloody battle, in which the Britons massacred all his infantry, the Roman lieutenant was compelled to seek refuge with his cavalry in the camp.

Terrified at the disaster which his avarice and cruelty

had caused, the procurator, Cato Decianus, fled to Gaul, followed by the maledictions of the inhabitants of the province on which he had brought so many evils.

In the midst of these events, Suetonius advanced with admirable courage into the midst of the insurgent tribes as far as London; which had not yet been elevated to the rank of a colony, although, as a city, it was already celebrated by the number of its merchants and the extent of its commerce.

Finding that it was impossible to defend the place, he resolved to sacrifice a city to the general safety, and withdrew, accompanied by all who had either the means or will to follow him.

It was not long before the storm burst upon the wretched inhabitants, whom the insurgents massacred without pity or remorse, although the majority of them consisted of their own countrymen, against whom their rage appeared quite as much excited as against the Romans, on account of their submission to the common enemy.

Seventy thousand are computed to have perished in the slaughter.

Never before had such an indiscriminate destruction been witnessed in the island. Tacitus, in speaking of the Britons, says:—

"They would neither take the vanquished prisoners, sell them, nor ransom their lives and liberties; but hastened to massacre, torture, and crucify them, as if to avenge themselves beforehand for the cruel punishments which the future had in store for them."

Suetonius, uniting the fourteenth legion, the auxiliaries of the twenty-first, and the garrisons of the neighbouring towns, soon found himself at the head of ten thousand men; and with such an army no longer hesitated to meet the enemy, before whom he had hitherto deemed it advisable to retreat. With great skill, he took up his position at the entrance of a narrow defile, his infantry in the centre, the cavalry forming the wings.

The Britons, a countless multitude, advanced to battle without order and discipline, animated by the desire of vengeance and the hope of recovering their liberty.

A Group of Ancient Britons.

Before the struggle commenced, a chariot was seen, drawn slowly through their ranks: in it was a female of tall stature and dignified bearing, enveloped in the folds of a long mantle, a chain of gold round her waist, and her long hair floating to the ground. It was the outraged Boadicea, who, accompanied by her daughters, appealed to the courage of her countrymen.

"The Britons," she cried, "are accustomed to fight under the command of a woman; there is no question now of avenging so many illustrious ancestors from whom I am descended, my kingdom, or my plundered treasures. Avenge me as a simple woman, as one of your own class. Avenge my liberty outraged; my body torn by the scourge; and the innocence of my daughters dishonoured! The Romans respect neither the age of our old men nor the chastity of our children; their avarice is insatiable. Are not our persons taxed?—do we not pay even for the permission to bear our heads? Nor is that all; the tax must be paid for those who cease to live. It was reserved for the execrable tyranny of the Romans," she added, "to raise a revenue from the dead. But there are just gods—avenging gods. A legion that dared oppose us

has perished; the rest of the Romans conceal themselves, or already think of flight. They cannot hear without trembling the cries of so many thousand men; how, then, will they support the shock of your blows? Consider your countless battalions, reflect on the motives of this war, and you will understand that the day has arrived to vanquish or die. Such will—shall be the fate of one woman—let men live slaves if they will." (Tacitus, Annal XIV.)

Animated by these inspiring words, the recollection of their injuries, and the blood they had already shed, the Britons commenced the combat. The legion, with their eyes fixed upon their chief, waited the signal. It was given, and they advanced in a triangular battalion; the auxilaries followed the impetuous movement, and the squadrons charged with their lances in rest. Nothing could resist that fearful shock. The immense multitude was put to flight, but the chariots

Roman Soldiers passing over a Bridge of Boats.—From the Antonine Column.

containing their wives and children, who had followed to be spectators of their victory, barred the way. The victors spared neither women, children, nor animals. The carnage was fearful: 80,000 Britons remained upon the plain.

Boadicea, the witness and victim of this sad defeat, kept the promise she had made—not to fall into the power of the Romans—but ended her life by poison.

This victory re-established the reputation of the Roman arms; but it was not permitted to Suetonius to complete the task he had begun; he was shortly afterwards recalled to Rome, to answer charges brought against him by his enemies, and although acquitted, lost the favour of a prince, in whose reign no man of celebrity was spared.

Suetonius had the honour of training in the art of war the illustrious Agricola.

The first three successors of Suetonius in Britain were Petronius Turpilianus, Trebellius Maximus, and Vettius Bolanus; their government did not advance the empire, then divided between Galba and Otho, and afterwards between Otho and Vitellius.

During the reign of the last prince a civil war broke out among the Brigantes, whose queen, Cartesmunda, proud of the alliance and support she received from Rome as the recompense of her treachery in delivering Caractacus into their hands, had given way to her lascivious passions. According to Tacitus, she expelled her husband Venusius from her throne and bed, and raised to his place his esquire Vellocate. This crime shook her authority; the people declared themselves in favour of the outraged husband, whose rival was supported only by the adulterous passion of the queen and the cruelties which he exercised.

The queen, seeing her throne in peril, called the Romans to her aid. They marched to her succour, and succeeded in delivering her from the hands of her indignant subjects, but Venusius remained master of her kingdom, and the Romans had the weight of another war to sustain.

Such was the state of Britain when Vespasian, having conquered his rival Vitellius, succeeded to the throne.

The new emperor intrusted the government of the island to an experienced general named Petilius Cereales, who partially subdued the Brigantes, and was pushing the war with energy when his master recalled him.

His successor was Julius Frontinus, who reduced the Silures to obedience.

But it was reserved to another general to achieve the conquest of a proud and warlike nation, and to render it durable by the qualities of justice and moderation. The great man who gave this useful lesson to the world was Agricola, named governor of Britain in the year 78 of the Christian era. He had already visited the island, having served in the army as tribune, under the command of Suetonius Paulinus, who esteemed and treated him as a friend.

His first step was to repress the revolt of the Ordovices, whom he punished with rigour; he next renewed the attack on the island of Anglesea, which he took, owing to the courage of his German auxiliaries, who, not having vessels at their command, swam over the arm of the sea which divides it from Britain.

In the following campaign, he extended the limits of the Roman government to the Tay, leaving strong garrisons on all the important points.

In his fourth campaign, Agricola crossed the Forth to the southern frontier of Caledonia, or Scotland, and erected, to repress the invasion of the warlike inhabitants, a line of fortifications between the Forth and the Clyde.

But it is as an administrator or civil governor that Agricola chiefly merits our praise. He lessened, as much as possible, the tribute levied on the vanquished Britons by an equitable adjustment, suppressed the most onerous monopolies, and multiplied the means of transport and commerce.

Having succeeded in gaining the good opinion of the people he was called to rule over by his valour and equity, the governor next tried to keep them peaceable by inculcating a taste for the arts and pleasures. He encouraged the erection of temples and forums; aided all public works by grants from the treasury; and caused the sons of the principal chiefs and princes to be instructed in the sciences. Gradually those who had disdained the language of the conquerors devoted themselves to its attainment. They assumed the toga, and affected the tastes, and in too many instances the vices, of their masters.

Titus, who had succeeded to the throne of his father, Vespasian, reigned but two years, and left the empire to the ferocious Domitian; who, like most suspicious natures, felt jealous lest any other name should become greater than his own. He did not venture, however, to recall Agricola, who was permitted to pursue his career of glory, and, in the fifth year of his government, advanced with his legions to the west, as far as the coast opposite to Ireland.

A statesman, administrator, and soldier, like the illustrious pupil of Suetonius, must have comprehended the advantage of conquering the sister island; the facilities which it would afford to the increasing commerce between Spain, Gaul, and Britain: he renounced, however, the enterprise from some unknown reason, and Ireland, for nearly a thousand years longer, preserved her independence.

The hostilities which were continually breaking out between the Mæatæ and the Caledonians drew Agricola to the north of Britain. In his first campaign against them, which commenced in the sixth year of his government, the Romans experienced a severe check, the enemy having nearly forced their camp, and were only repulsed after causing considerable damage.

In the seventh and last year of his residence on the island, Agricola made his great attempt to subdue these ferocious nations, and his preparations were worthy his great military reputation and the magnitude of the task he had undertaken. He joined to his legions and auxiliaries from the continent, cohorts of Britons, drawn from the southern portion of the island; and supplied his army by means of a numerous fleet, which sailed along the coast.

The Romans advanced without encountering any serious obstacle as far as the Grampians, where the Caledonians, under the celebrated chief Galgacus, were drawn up to oppose them, thirty thousand strong. The first ranks, consisting of the bravest of the tribes, occupied the level plain; the next and secondary ones covered the sides of the mountains, rising in half-circles one above another as in a vast amphitheatre.

Tacitus has recorded the harangue of the leader of the Caledonians; it is bold, energetic, and worthy of the chief of a nation which—whatever its other defects—was, at least, impressed with an indomitable love of freedom and undoubted courage.

"We have no other resource but to conquer," said Galgacus; "and that is my principal hope; for battle, the glorious choice of brave men, is here the only safety for cowards. Behind us is the ocean and the Roman fleet; before us the Romans—brigands, devastators of the world, who, when they can no longer find land to ravage, search the seas. Neither the east nor the west have glutted their avarice, for they alone of all mankind covet alike the treasure of the rich and the denier of the poor. To take, massacre, and pillage, the Romans call to govern; and when they make a desert, they say—'Peace is established.' Our sons are carried off to serve in distant countries; our wives and sisters, if they escape the brutality of the enemy, are dishonoured by those who falsely call themselves our friends and guests; our fortunes are consumed in tributes, our food in supplies for their armies, our arms and bodies are wasted by blows and outrages whilst fortifying for them our marshes and lands.

"Courage! you who love glory, and you who hold to life. The Trinobantes, under a woman, burnt a colony and carried a Roman camp; and, if they had not slumbered in success, would have broken their yoke. We, who still are unshaken, unsubdued, and free, shall we not show on the first encounter what kind of men are the Caledonians?

"The Romans triumph by our discords; they render the vices of their enemies subservient to their advantage and the glory of their armies, who, formed by a mixture of so many nations, are kept together only by success, and will be dispersed by reverse. It is fear, it is terror—feeble bonds—which keep together these Gauls, Germans, and, I am ashamed to say, these Britons, who lend their blood to foreign dominion; these bonds once broken, and those who cease to fear will begin to hate. All the excitements to victory are here: no wife influences the courage of the Romans, no father will reproach their flight; feeble in number and ignorant of the country, they only behold the sea, and skies, and unknown forests, in the midst of which, surrounded and enclosed, they are delivered to us by the gods.

"March, then, to battle, and think of your fathers and children!"

The Caledonians received these soul-inspiring words—which have been rendered nearly word for word from the Roman historian—with tumultuous clamours of applause; their excitement was still further increased by the songs of the bards and the exhortations of the Druids.

At the sight of the Caledonians, it became difficult to keep the Romans in the intrenchments, and Agricola, seeing their impatience for battle, exhorted them to conquest.

"Defeat itself," he said, "will not be without glory; but you will not yield. The bravest of the Britons have been already vanished; those who remain are cowardly

and timid, as you behold on the heights, which you will illustrate by a memorable victory. Put an end," he concluded, "to so many expeditions, and add another great day to fifty years of triumph!"

At these words the ardour of his soldiers could no longer be repressed. They quitted the camp, and their brave leader ranged them in order of battle: the auxiliaries on foot, to the number of eight thousand, in the centre; three thousand horsemen formed the wings; the legions being held in reserve.

The first line of the Caledonians descended to the plain, which trembled beneath the galloping of the horses and the rolling of the war-chariots. Agricola, seeing the superiority of the enemy in point of numbers, deployed his ranks, resolved neither to fly or yield.

Favoured by their position, the barbarians had the advantage as long as they fought at a distance with javelins and arrows; which became useless, however, when the Roman general, having commanded the auxiliaries to engage man to man, they rushed to the encounter with their long sharp swords; another body assailed the rocks, which they carried by assault, and the Caledonians retreated behind their horsemen and chariots; whilst the Roman cavalry, falling on the confused mass, completed the rout.

The plain soon became one wide scene of carnage; ten thousand Caledonians perished; whilst their enemy lost only three hundred and sixty men.

The victors passed the night in drunkenness and pillage; whilst the vanquished, men and women, wandered about the country, yielding to despair. In their rage they destroyed their habitations, to prevent their being plundered by the Romans.

Agricola rendered an account of his victory to the emperor, in terms remarkable for modesty and simplicity. The jealous Domitian received his letter with apparent joy, but secret wrath; with his usual cunning, however, he dissembled his real sentiments till time had weakened the enthusiasm of the people and the favour of the army for the man he hated. Gradually a report gained ground that the victorious general was to be recalled from the scene of his triumphs to take the command in Syria, and Domitian demanded for him the honours of a triumph.

The victor dared not, however, present himself to the acclamations of the people for fear of exciting the jealousy of his imperial master. He entered Rome privately, and by night, and presented himself before the tyrant, who received him coldly and in silence. He soon became confounded with the crowd of courtiers, and only escaped from the peril of his glory by appearing himself to forget it.

Domitian reigned some years after his return, and the fury with which he persecuted Salustius Lucullus, one of the successors of Agricola, sufficiently proved the violence he had done to his cruel nature in sparing the life of the latter.

Salustius had had the temerity to give his name to a new kind of lance, which he had, in all probability, invented. The monster looked upon this little harmless piece of vanity as an offence, and put him to death.

Little is known of the state of Britain from Domitian to Adrian, when many of the nations who had been subject to the yoke of Rome began to show signs of impatience, and all the cares of the new emperor were to confirm the peace of the world. He re-established the system of Augustus, abandoned the conquests of Trajan, and limited the empire in the east to the Euphrates. He visited the provinces, and arrived at last in Britain, where he corrected many abuses, and built the celebrated wall which bore his name, in order to repress the incursions of the Caledonians; it extended upwards of eighty miles from the mouth of the Tyne to the Irish Sea.

Rome abandoned without a struggle the country included between the wall of Adrian and that of Agricola, an extent of about one hundred miles; a portion of it, however, was regained under Antoninus Pius, the adopted son and successor of Adrian.

During the thirty years which succeeded, the empire experienced the extreme vicissitudes to which all despotic empires are liable, in passing from the sceptre of the wise and good Marcus Aurelius into the hands of the infamous Commodus. The glory of Rome during the reign of this execrable monster had no other asylum than in her armies, which caused her frontiers to be respected by the barbarians, and crushed the several attempts at revolt in Germany, Dacia, and Britain.

The Caledonians, who had recovered from the cruel defeat they had suffered under Agricola, made a successful irruption into the north of the island, where they surprised and cut to pieces a body of Roman troops.

The peril of the province became extreme.

Commodus, to avoid the disgrace of losing it, conferred the government of the island upon Ulpius Marcellus, a general worthy of the antique days of Rome. Being a sober man, just, and of undaunted courage, he obtained a signal victory over the Caledonians, and re-established peace. He was soon afterwards recalled.

He was succeeded by Perennis, a favourite of Commodus, who by his arbitrary, tyrannical conduct so excited the hatred of his legions, that they forgot their long habits of discipline and slavish obedience to the emperor.

The soldiers delegated fifteen hundred of their number to lay their complaints before the imperial throne. This numerous deputation passed peaceably through Gaul and Italy, and Commodus himself set forward to meet it. He listened to their complaints, and, led by his terrors rather than the love of justice, abandoned their general to the vengeance of his rebellious troops.

Perennis was scourged to death by them with rods.

The legions in Britain, emboldened by their success, demanded, and obtained from the feeble hands of their master a general of obscure origin but undoubted merit, Publius Helvius Pertinax, who attempted to restore discipline in their ranks, but only partially succeeded. The habit of obedience was broken, and the same troops who had so clamourously demanded his appointment, soon afterwards solicited his recall.

He returned to fill a civil employment in Rome, where fortune held in store for him supreme grandeur and a cruel fall.

Decimus Clodius Albinus, who succeeded him, was successful not only in reducing the army to obedience, but in obtaining their affection. He administered the province so well that the emperor, in a fit of gratitude, conferred on him the title of Cæsar; an honour which, in all probability, would very soon have been repented of, if it had not led to his disgrace, had not a revolution in the palace removed Commodus from the throne, and raised Pertinax in his stead.

The new reign lasted but three months; Pertinax fell a victim to his attempt to reform the abuses which were corroding the very heart of the empire. He was massacred by the Pretorian guards.

The election of his successor shows to how fearful a state Rome had degenerated. The empire was put up to auction and sold, like common merchandise, to the highest bidder. Didius Julianus by his great wealth purchased the empire; though bought by gold, it could not be retained by the same means. Septimus Severus no sooner learnt the death of Pertinax than he hastened to Rome, at the head of his legions, and the crime was quickly avenged by the death of the assassins and that of the feeble prince whom they had placed upon the throne.

After the death of Albinus, who, driven to extremities by the secret practices against his life, had marched into Gaul, and was defeated at Lyons, Severus, at an advanced age, visited Britain, and defeated the Caledonians, whom he compelled to sue for peace. It was whilst engaged in this memorable expedition, that his son, Caracalla, tried to poison him.

At the termination of the war, the conqueror made York his residence, and employed his army in constructing the gigantic wall whose remains still bear his name. It was seventy-eight miles long, and ran parallel with the remains of the one built by Adrian; its height, twelve feet, without comprising the parapet; its width, eight; and was still further strengthened by a succession of towers and fortresses, and was terminated in 210 of the Christian era.

Falling into a severe sickness, his unworthy son took occasion to seduce the allegiance of a portion of the army, who proclaimed him Emperor. The aged prince commanded himself to be carried to his tribunal, before which he compelled the usurper, his tribunes and centurions, to appear; the guilty son prostrated himself, and demanded pardon.

"What!" exclaimed his father, in a tone of bitter irony, "have you yet to learn that it is the head and not the feet which govern?" The reproach was the more bitter as the disease from which the speaker was dying had settled in his feet, and rendered him incapable either of mounting on horseback, or walking.

Shortly afterwards he expired at York.

Septimus Severus died the fourth of April, 211, after a reign of eighteen years; his last words were, "I received the republic divided and weak at every point, I leave it at peace and consolidated, even in Britain; old and disabled in my legs, I bequeath to my sons a powerful empire if they are prudent, if not a feeble one."

During the third century, the empire was agitated by numerous competitions for the purple, which were somewhat appeased in the accession of Diocletian. Britain afforded to these pretenders not only an asylum, but the means of advocating their claims to the purple. One of these, Carausius, was only got rid of by assassination.

The murderer, Allectus, attempted to succeed him, and maintained himself in the island till defeated by Constantius, who had been elevated to the rank of Cæsar: thus Britain was once more united to the empire.

The victor made himself loved by the Britons, by his equitable and wise administration, and continued to reside amongst them till the abdication of Diocletian and Maximian elevated him to the imperial throne.

At his death, which occurred in York, in 306, he recommended to the army, who were devoted to him, his son, the celebrated Constantine, who was immediately saluted Emperor and Augustus.

The tradition that St. Paul and St. Peter preached the gospel in the island at one period, found general credence. It must be looked upon with extreme suspicion, there not being the slightest historical evidence to support it, and the probabilities highly against it; still, it is certain that, at a very early age, Christianity was introduced amongst us. Many of the Romans, who had received the new religion and fled from the persecutions of Claudius and Nero, found refuge in Britain, where the imperial edicts were less rigourously obeyed, till the persecution of Diocletian, when the churches throughout the empire was ordered to be closed, and the refusal of the new sect to offer sacrifice to the gods of Rome, punished with death.

Much as Constantius condemned, he dared not annul the impious mandate he had received. Ascending his tribunal, before which the principal officers, both of his army and household, had been summoned, he read aloud the edict, and added that those who professed the new faith, must decide on abandoning either their faith or their employments. Many, doubtless, chose the former alternative; since we are told that the prince, in great indignation, dismissed the apostates from his service, observing that it was impossible for him to trust those who had denied their convictions. His lieutenants, however, were less scrupulous, and Christian blood, no doubt, was shed to maintain the state religion of the empire.

Alban, the proto-martyr—as the latter designation implies—was the first who suffered; and the names of Julius and Aaron, citizens of Caerlton, upon the Usk, have also been handed down to posterity as two of the earliest victims.

On the accession of Constantine to the throne, religious toleration was restored throughout the empire.

Christianity now made rapid progress in the island. A hierarchy became established, and at the Council of Arles, in 814, three English bishops assisted—those of York, London, and Camalodunum.

After the death of Constantine, we see two people disappear, in name at least, from the page of history—the Maætæ and the Caledonians, who were replaced by the Picts and the Scots. There is every reason to believe that the warlike nation the Caledonians, who so long resisted the Romans, and the Picts are the same race; the last name derived from the Latin word "picti," having been given them from their habit of painting their bodies.

The Scots had a widely different origin: they originally came over from Ireland, where they inhabited the eastern coasts, and settled in the neighbourhood of Loch Lomond, and made an alliance with the nearest tribes, for the purpose of ravaging the possessions of the Britons.

They were severely chastised by Theodosius, who visited Britain in 343. He succeeded in expelling them from the Roman provinces and driving them back to their wild retreats.

Maximus, who afterwards assumed the title of Augustus, while in Britain carried on the war against the Picts and Scots with unrelenting severity; his ambition, however, led him to attempt the conquest of the whole western empire, in which he failed, and was beheaded at Aquileia. His army, composed in a great majority of Britons, never returned to their native country, which consequently was left in a great

measure defenceless. So favourable an occasion did not escape the vigilance of the Picts and Scots, who made successive inroads in the island and returned to their mountain fastnesses laden with plunder.

The power of Rome was now shaken by the irruption of barbarians of various denominations, who, issuing from the east and north, depopulated her fairest provinces. Assailed at so many points at once, it seemed as if the nations of the earth had been let loose to uproot her supremacy and break the shackles which for so many ages had fettered the greater part of the world. The Goths, Vandals, and Alans, led by Alaric, crossing the Julian Alps, swept like a torrent over the fertile plains of Italy. The German tribes devastated Gaul, and the Roman legions in Britain, deprived of all communication with the Emperor Honorius, determined on electing an emperor for themselves.

The first whom they selected for the purple was Marcus, whom his soldiers, very soon after elevating him to the imperial dignity, put to death: after him an adventurer named Constantine, who paid for his short lived dignity with his life.

The island had for some time been in this distracted state, when the Britons, who had not ceased to regret the loss of their freedom, deeming the occasion favourable, rose in arms, deposed the Roman magistrates, and proclaimed their independence; and afterwards succeeded in driving the Picts and Scots back to their own country.

When the Emperor Honorius heard of this revolution, he wrote to the states of Britain, to say that they must provide for their safety, and govern themselves; by which concession the rule of Rome in the island was looked on as at an end.

The Britons, at various periods afterwards, demanded the assistance of the empire against their terrible enemies, the Picts, who still continued to harass them; but no aid of any consequence was accorded.

How frequently do we read, in the history of the world, of a nation, urged by an irresistible, though unknown principle, pursue the path of conquest, not for their own advantage, but for the ultimate benefit of the people whom they subject. Such was the result of the Roman invasion of Britain, which proved neither profitable nor advantageous to the conquerors.

Appianus of Alexandria, who flourished A.D. 123, wrote a history of all the nations whom Rome had subdued, in twenty-four books; he says:—"The Romans have penetrated into Britain, and taken possession of the greater and better part of the island; but they do not desire the rest, because that which they already possess is not of the slightest benefit to them."

The historian was right, for, despite the taxes, the produce of the mines, and the exportation of corn, the island could never have been a source of great profit to the victors; notwithstanding which we trace them, urged by a resistless combination of events, progressing step by step, till the greater part of the country was subdued. Fortunately, they saved the seeds of a civilisation more endurable than their dominion.

For nearly a century, the portion of Britain which had submitted to their yoke formed but a single province; it was first separated into two during the reign of the emperor Severus. This division was afterwards extended to five:—

1st. Flavia Cæsariensis, which consisted of the western portion of the island.

2nd. Britannia Prima, the country between the Thames and the Humber.

3rd. Britannia Secunda, lying between the Severn and the sea, now known by the name of Wales.

4th. Maxima Cæsariensis, lying to the north of the two preceding ones, extending to the Wall of Severus, between the Tyne and the Solway.

5th. Valentia, comprising the lands from the Wall of Severus to the Forth and Clyde.

The conquests of Agricola, which extended to the Grampians, although dignified by the rank of a province under the name of Vespasiana, remained but a short time in the possession of the Romans.

The limits of the Roman provinces in the island have given rise to many discussions amongst the learned. We have taken them as laid down by Richard, of Cirencester, *De Situ Britain*. Each of these provinces had a separate ruler, subject to the governor-general of Britain, who was named by the emperor, under the title of Prefect. He exercised all but sovereign authority, and united in his hands both the military and judicial power. Under him was a procurator, or questor, who levied the taxes, and administered the revenues of the island.

The principal sources of revenue were a poll tax, a tax on funerals and inheritances, on slaves, on all public sales, and an impost upon cattle and agricultural produce.

The tax upon cattle, which was called Scriptura, from the collectors visiting the pastures and writing down lists of the number and kind which each estate nourished, was particularly oppressive to the Britons, and one of the most frequent causes of revolt.

In addition to these burdens, the Romans levied imposts upon merchandise, either imported or exported, and formed a considerable item in their revenue; the commerce between the empire and Britain having been greatly extended. Agriculture also made immense progress in the island, in which cities of considerable importance were built.

Of these the most important in a commercial point of view were Clausentum, or Southampton, and London.

In the second century, Britain contained upwards of a hundred cities; the principal were London, Colchester, Bath, Gloucester, Caerlton, Chester, Lincoln, and Chesterfield; most of them built upon lands which the emperors had bestowed upon the veterans of those legions whose descendants formed the greater part of the population. The larger cities, about ten in number, enjoyed the "jus latii," which conferred, amongst other privileges, the right of electing their magistrates. The inferior ones, called Stipendiaries, paid tribute to the emperor, and were governed by officers under the authority of the prefect.

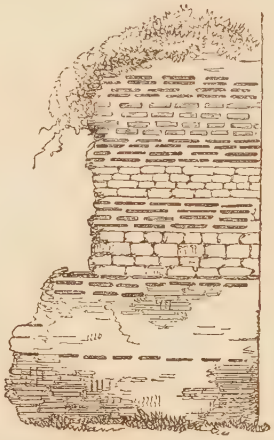
Thus we perceive that Britain owed to Rome, not only her first steps in the path of civilisation, but her municipal government, a code of written laws, judges to interpret them, and civil instead of priestly tribunals; whilst, at the same time, her arts and refinements gradually wrought a change in the savage but warlike character of its inhabitants, who, previous to their invasion, lived in a state of barbarism, inhabiting wretched huts, built in the rudest form. Their progress in architecture must have been rapid.

CHAPTER III.

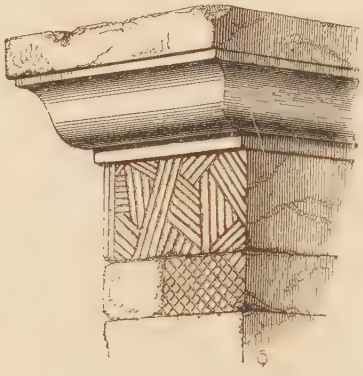
Of Roman Architecture in Britain.

THE remains of Roman architecture in Britain, though numerous, do not exhibit any perfect buildings, and the workmanship in general is not equal to that of the continental remains. The buildings seem to have been inferior and of smaller dimensions, and there is very little of ornamental detail remaining, except the tesselated pavements, of which many fine examples yet remain in the Roman villas which have been discovered from time to time in various parts of the kingdom.

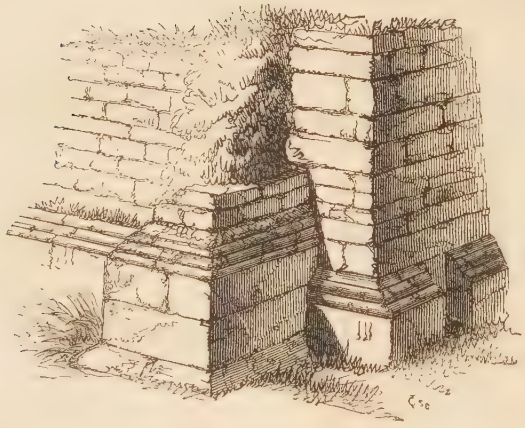
Capital.



Masonry at Colchester.



Cornice.



Basement.

Doorway at Bird-Oswald.

The principal places where Roman remains are now to be found are Lincoln, Dover Castle, St. Albans, Richborough Castle, Porchester, York, Cirencester, Leicester, Colchester, &c. But in all these there is little ornamentation or detail left, the remains consisting chiefly of plain walls, the masonry of which has peculiarities of character which mark its date. Of the masonry there are two principal varieties, the first, and that which is most readily recognised, consists of alternate layers or bands of pebbles, or small stones imbedded in mortar, and tiles or flat stones. "These bands consisted of three or four courses of tiles or stones laid through the wall, and were placed at two or three feet from each other, the intermediate spaces being raised with a sort of cement composed of mortar and pebbles or sometimes rag-stones, or such materials as the country affords." In this manner are built the Mint wall at Lincoln, the Jewry wall at Leicester, Verulam (St. Albans), Porchester, Richborough, York, Pevensey, Chesterford, Colchester, Wroxeter, Silchester, &c.

The other variety consists of walls formed of square stones, or ashlar, as the Roman wall in Northumberland. These are sometimes very large, as at the north gate (or Newport gate), Lincoln. Smaller kinds of ashlar of almost cubical blocks occur at the multangular tower and other buildings at York. The mortar used in all these walls is in general mixed with pounded brick.

It will not be necessary here to go into a description of all these buildings, but a few of the most remarkable may be mentioned; one of the most curious and interesting of these is the PHAROS IN THE CASTLE OF DOVER, though it has undergone much alteration, particularly in the 15th century: "wherever the outer casing is worn away, or has been removed by violence, the walls exhibit the usual mode of Roman building with the material of the district, in this case with tufa or stalactite brought perhaps from the opposite coast of France, and flint, with layers of large

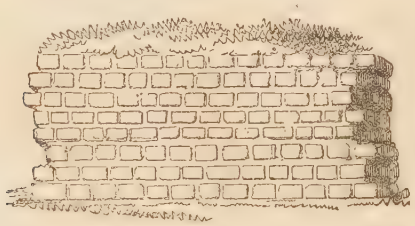
flat Roman bricks, some of them two feet long, each layer two courses deep, placed regularly and horizontally in the walls at equal intervals, or nearly so. No less than eight angles. This tower is externally octagonal in form. Internally the space inclosed forms a square. The doorway, recently blocked up, is on the south side, and the arch

The Treaty of Peace between the Saxon Leaders and the British King.

of these layers of brick-work are visible on the south-east side, other layers are apparently concealed by the external and subsequent casing of flint and stone, and where the casing of flints is perfect, quoins of stone appear at the turned and faced with a single row of large Roman bricks, springs from a kind of rude impost-moulding, somewhat resembling that of the Roman gateway at Lincoln; but this is not now visible. In the interior, the constructive features

of the original Roman work were, before the entrance was closed up, far more visible and perfect than on the exterior, and the facing of the bricks was quite smooth; yet the effect of the alterations is here also plainly apparent, and the original windows, the arches of which are turned with Roman brick, have been filled up with flint masonry. Both the external as well as the internal facings of the entrance doorway on the south side, were a few years back, when the interior could be readily examined, far from perfect. Over this doorway were two windows, one above the other, each arched with brickwork. On the east side of the tower is a rather lofty arch faced with stone, the soffit of which, however, appears to have been turned with brick; this probably communicated with some building adjoining. Over this arch is a window now blocked up."

Richborough Castle, in Kent, is one of the most important of the Roman remains in England, It is a large parallelogram including within it an area of five acres. The walls to the height of six feet are more than eleven feet thick, and above that ten feet eight inches; and the masonry is thus described by the Rev. C. H. Hartshorne :—"At Richborough, commencing at the ground, there are on the north side, where the masonry is displayed in its most perfect

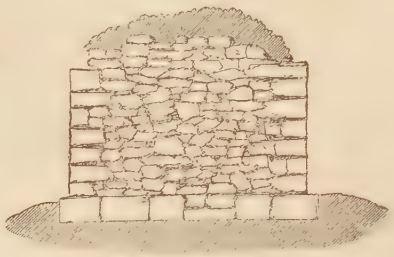


Section of the Wall.

state, first of all, four courses of flint in their natural form, then three courses dressed; to these succeed two courses of bonding tile, and then they rise above each other in the following order; seven courses of ashlar and two of tile; seven courses of ashlar and two of tile; seven courses of ashlar and two of tile; again, seven courses of ashlar and two of tile; eight courses of ashlar and two of tile; nine courses of ashlar. The extreme height of this wall is twenty-three feet two inches, and its thickness ten feet eight inches."

One of the most perfect and interesting of Roman remains is the archway at Lincoln, known as "Newport Gate," and styled by Dr. Stukely "the noblest remnant of this sort in Britain." It was the north gate of the Roman city of Lindum, and from it a military way called the Ermine-street, leading to Winteringham on the Humber, may still be traced, and it still forms the principal entrance into the city from the north. It is supposed to have had a large central arch and two smaller ones at the sides, that on the west having been destroyed, the larger being about fifteen feet, and the lesser ones seven feet in width. It is built of squared stone, cut as far as the top of the arch, of remarkably large size. It is without ornament of any kind, but is said by Rickman to have had architrave and impost mouldings. That of the architrave, if it ever existed, has entirely disappeared, but there is, or was lately, a small portion of the impost moulding remaining, on the west side of the large arch. The masonry, which exhibits none of the usual bands of tiles so frequent in other buildings, will be best understood by the annexed view, which gives every stone in its proper place.

There is another piece of Roman work in the neighbourhood of Newport gate, which is a piece of wall built with ashlar and bonding courses of tile. It is known as the Mint Wall.



Section of the Wall.

But perhaps the most interesting of all the Roman remains in Britain is the Roman Wall, which reaches across the narrow part of the island in Northumberland and Cumberland, commencing at Wallsend, on the Tyne, running through Newcastle and Carlisle, and terminating at Bowness, in Cumberland. A most interesting and fully illustrated account of this wall has been given to the world by the Rev. J. Collingwood Bruce, from which work we have (by the kind permission of the author) copied the preceding illustrations.

The conquests of the Romans in Britain had been carried by Agricola as far as the Friths of Forth and Clyde; but after his recall, the natives had recovered possession of their own soil, and matters fell again into confusion. "In the year 120—thirty-five years after the recall of Agricola—affairs in Britain had fallen into such confusion as to require the presence of the Emperor Hadrian, who had assumed the Imperial purple three years before. He did not attempt to regain the conquests which Agricola had made in Scotland, but prudently sought to make the line of forts which that general had constructed in his second

Roman Coin.

campaign the limit of his empire. With this object in view, he drew a wall across the island—The Barrier of the Lower Isthmus. The testimony of Spartian, the historian of his reign, though brief is decisive. Hadrian, says he, visited Britain, when he corrected many things, and first drew a wall (*Murus*), eighty miles in length, to divide the barbarians from the Romans.

"The arrival in Britain of Hadrian, one of Rome's greatest generals, was thought an event of sufficient importance to be commemorated in the currency of the empire. A large brass coin was struck by decree of the Senate in the year 121.

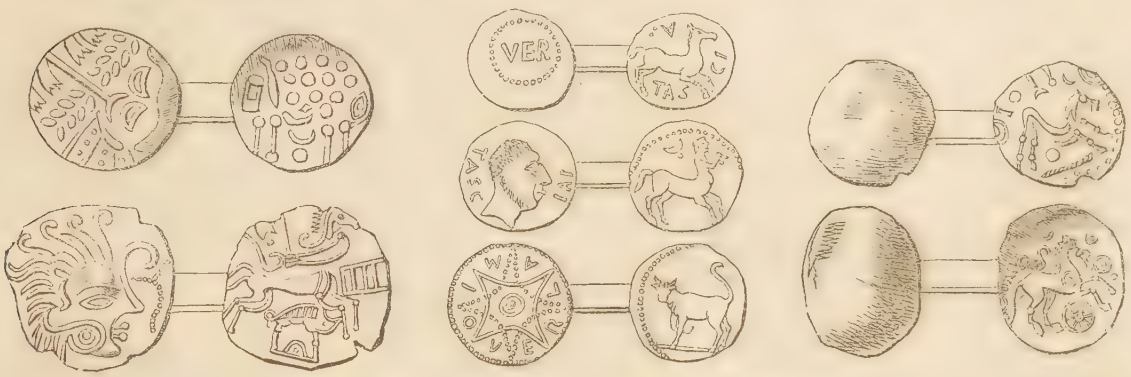
"The plans and prowess of the emperor were thought to have effectually secured that portion of the island which it was prudent to retain in the grasp of Rome. This circumstance was announced to the world in another coin, bearing, on the reverse, a name destined to sound through regions Hadrian never knew—BRITANNIA; and representing a female figure seated on a rock, having a spear in her left hand, and a shield by her side." It is curious to observe how closely this figure resembles that on the modern coins, the chief alterations being that the spear is changed into a trident, and the right hand extended offering the olive branch of peace to all the world.

Arguments have been brought forward by some antiquaries to show that the wall and the vallum by which it is accompanied, belong to two different periods; but Mr. Bruce contends that they are both to be considered as forming part of the great engineering work of Hadrian. It consists of a stone wall, or *murus*, and a wall of earth, or *vallum*. These two run always near together, but not always parallel. The vallum is likewise rather the shortest, terminating at Newcastle on the east, and at Drumburgh, about three miles from Bowness, the western extremity of the wall.

The most striking feature in the plan, both of the murus and the vallum, is the determinate manner in which they pursue their straightforward course. The vallum makes fewer deviations from a right line than the stone wall; but as the wall traverses higher ground, this remarkable tendency is more easily detected in it than in the other. Shooting over the country, in its onward course it only swerves from a straight line to take in its route the boldest elevations. So far from declining a hill, it uniformly selects one. For nineteen miles out of Newcastle, the road to Carlisle runs upon the foundations of the wall, and during the summer months its dusty surface contrasts well with the surrounding verdure. Often will the traveller, after attaining some of the steep acclivities of his path, observe the road stretching for miles in an undeviating course to the east and the west of him, resembling, as Hutton expresses it, a white ribbon on a green ground. But if it never moves from a right line, except to occupy the highest points, it never fails to seize them as they occur, no matter how often it is compelled, with this view, to change its direction. It never bends in a curve, but always at an angle. Hence, along the craggy precipices between Sewingshields and Thirlwall, it is obliged to pursue a remarkably zig-zag course; for it takes in its range, with the utmost pertinacity, every projecting rock."

Though no part of the wall now retains its full height, it has been calculated that when entire it was about 18 or 15 feet, including the parapet. Its general thickness is about eight feet, though it varies in different parts from six feet to ten and a half feet. It is "throughout the whole of its length accompanied on its northern margin by a broad and deep FOSSE, which, by increasing the comparative height of the wall, added greatly to its strength. This portion of the barrier may yet be traced, with trifling interruptions, from sea to sea."

The masonry of the wall is somewhat peculiar; it has none of the binding courses of tile which are, in many parts of England, and on the continent, so characteristic of Roman work. No tiles are used in the construction. The outer face of the wall on both sides is formed of squared blocks of stone, usually called ashlar, and the interior of rubble, imbedded in mortar. These blocks are about eight or nine inches thick, and ten or eleven wide; their length is considerably more, sometimes as much as 22 inches, and



Ancient Roman Coins struck during the Roman period in England.

tapering to the opposite end, which was firmly bedded into the rubble. The whole rested on a course of large foundation stones.

On or near the wall were placed, at tolerably regular intervals, stationary camps, or "stations," about seventeen or eighteen in number, and at still shorter intervals, that is, about a Roman mile from each other, were placed smaller towers, called from this circumstance, "Mile Castles." These are in general placed against the south side of the wall, and had mostly only one entrance, which was from the south; but in the more perfect of those at Gawfields shown in the accompanying view, there are two entrances, one on the south, and another through the main wall on the north.

More of ornamental detail seems to have been bestowed on the architecture of these stations and mile castles than on the wall, which was intended merely for defence. The walls have moulded basements and cornices, of which the woodcuts on page 18 are specimens; the one from Vendalana (Chesterholm) exhibits also the peculiar ornamentation of the surface of the stone work, which is produced by cutting lines in various directions, either lozenge-wise or parallel, horizontal, upright, oblique, or zig-zag-wise thus producing considerable variety. In the extremely interesting Saxon crypt at Hexham, which was built out of the ruins of the

Roman Wall, many varieties of this peculiar tooling, or "broaching," occur, along with ornamental mouldings, &c., and inscribed slabs, one of which has been cut to form the semi-circular head of a doorway. The beautiful fragment of a capital there given, was found in the station of Chesters (now Walwick Chesters). It has probably belonged to the portico of a temple. It appears to be a late variety of Corinthian or composite. It serves to show that there must have been considerable expense bestowed on these stations, which were, in fact, military cities, in which the commanders resided. The doorway given at p. 18, from the station of Bird-Oswald, is valuable as showing a peculiar form of door-head, cut out of a solid stone. It forms the entrance to the guard-chamber from the gateway of the station.

The Roman altars, sculptured fragments, inscribed stones, coins, implements of war, articles of personal ornament, utensils for domestic use, &c., which have been found along the line of the wall, are extremely numerous.

The Piratical Invasion of the Saxons under Hengist and Horsa.

CHAPTER IV.

Landing of the Saxons in Britain.

The island had not long recovered its independence before it suffered, in common with the rest of Europe, from the dreadful scourges of pestilence and famine, which thinned its population,—a circumstance which its restless enemies, the Picts and Scots, were not slow to take advantage of. Their inroads became frequent; and such was the terror which the atrocities they committed inspired, that the inhabitants of the districts they ravaged fled like frightened sheep before them.

In this extremity Vortigern, one of the most powerful of the British kings, advised an expedient which he borrowed from the Romans, whose emperors had long been accustomed to take the barbarians into their pay, that of calling in the Saxons to their aid.

Here it will be necessary to give some account of a people, whose footsteps upon the earth have left such indelible traces; and who laid the foundation of an empire destined to exceed that of Rome. The Saxons are a tribe of the vast nation of Scythians, who, seven hundred years before Christ, poured themselves like a torrent upon the countries washed by the Euxine, and drove before them the Cimbri. Compelled to advance in turn by the hordes of barbarians who succeeded them, they spread themselves over the borders of the Baltic and North seas, and penetrated as far as Scandinavia.

Their progress appears to have been slow but sure, till they gradually advanced to western Europe; and in the fourth century we find them on the Weser, the Ems, and the Rhine, divided into numerous tribes, each governed by a chief or prince.

Plunder appears to have been the principal means of

existence of that portion of the Scythian race settled on the borders of the seas and great rivers of Europe. They were the spoilers of the ocean, and undertook frequent expeditions to the coast of Gaul in their frail barks, made of osier, and covered with skins, pillaging wherever they landed; and retreating as soon as the booty was gathered, or a sufficient force collected to oppose them.

Here it is impossible not to be struck by the wonderful unity which characterises all the designs of Providence, the fitness of the means to the end proposed. In the same manner as the Jews were disciplined to become a nation by their sojourn of forty years in the desert, so were the Saxons, who descended from the Scythians, a people of Asiatic origin, gradually led to follow a maritime life from the localities in which they had settled; and finally led to the conquest of Britain, destined, from its geographical position, to be one day the centre of the commerce of the world.

Rude and savage as were our forefathers, they possessed one redeeming virtue: women were respected amongst them: polygamy was a law unknown: the wife was the companion and friend of her husband, not the slave; and we have never yet seen any nation arrive to great eminence in civilisation where such was not the case.

If we look at the East, the truth of this observation will at once become apparent. It is stagnant, and gives no sign of healthful life by progress or improvement: polygamy is its sin and punishment.

Roman Urns.

The chiefs of Britain were holding a council as to the most efficient means of repelling the invasion of the Picts and Scots, when intelligence was brought of the landing of a body of pirates under Hengist and Horsa, on the neighbouring coasts. Vortigern proposed that the strangers should be invited to assist them against the common enemy, which proposal was adopted, despite the repugnance of the Cambrian rulers, who vainly protested against the measure.

In consequence of this arrangement, a negotiation with the strangers was entered into; the Saxons were promised money and supplies in exchange for their swords and arms. The offers were acceded to, and the Picts and Scots driven back to their own country. Although the Saxons were far from being numerous, Vortigern became anxious to insure their services for the future, and a treaty was accordingly concluded between him and the two brothers Hengist and Horsa, by which the latter bound themselves to return with a much larger number of their countrymen, on condition of receiving a tract of land and subsidies of various kinds.

The island of Thanet was assigned to them for their abode.

Faithful to their promise, the allies returned with considerable reinforcements, and landed on the coast of Kent.

For some time the Saxons remained faithful to their engagement; but becoming tired of fighting for others, their pride increased with their success, and they demanded a large increase of territory, which was indignantly refused. That which they could not obtain by concession they resolved to gain by conquest, to which end they treacherously entered into an alliance with the Picts and Scots, whom they had hitherto combated. This fatal treaty made the Britons comprehend at last the error they had fallen into. Instead of allies they had given themselves masters. Indignation at the treachery, however, did not permit them at once to succumb; the struggle was a fierce and protracted one. Several British chiefs immortalised themselves in the contests by deeds worthy of the heroic age; amongst others Guortemir, the son of Vortigern, who, being pressed in battle, tore up a young tree by its roots, with which he killed Horsa, and put the Saxons to flight.

It is incontestable that the Britons obtained several victories, for Hengist and the rest of his companions re-embarked, and for five years the island was free from their presence.

The Saxons once more returned under the leadership of the surviving brother, Hengist, in formidable numbers, and soon afterwards gained the battle of Crayford, the result of which was the cession of the greater part of Kent to the conquerors in 473. Eight years later they obtained a second victory, which assured Hengist in his new possessions, from that date called the kingdom of Kent.

Twenty-eight years after the first landing of the Saxons, Ælla, another chief of their race, who boasted himself, like his predecessor, the descendant of Odin, arrived with his three sons in the same number of vessels, on the coast of Kent, and founded the kingdom of Sussex.

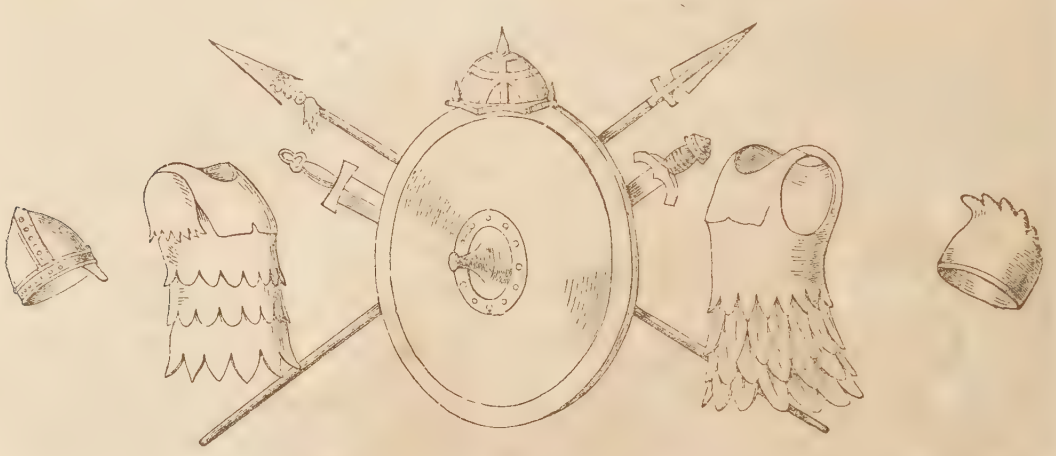
Sixteen years elapsed between the invasion of the last adventurer and that of the famous Cerdic, who landed in 493 on the West of Sussex and Kent, with a numerous body of troops. For nearly forty years his contests with the Britons were continued. He succeeded in seizing on the Isle of Wight and that portion of the main island now known as Hampshire. His son Cynric, and his grandson Cealwin, conquered the country between the south coast and the Severn, and established the kingdom of Wessex.

Cerdic, in this fierce and protracted struggle, had for his chief adversary the renowned Arthur, who gained, amongst other battles, those of Longborth and Morlas, celebrated in the poems of his friend and companion, the bard Llywarch

Hen, and at last the great battle of Badan Hele, near Bath, where he overthrew his enemies.

At this epoch, as at the time of the Roman conquest, had the Britons been united, they might have successfully resisted the attacks of their invaders; but they were torn by civil discord and intestine feuds, which contributed more to their subjugation than the swords of the Saxons. Even Arthur had to contend against the rivalry of his own family, and perished at last by the hand of his nephew, Medrawd.

Feeling that he was mortally wounded, the dying hero commanded himself to be secretly conveyed to the coast of Cornwall, and from thence to Glastonbury, where he expired. His death was for a long time concealed, and the mystery which veiled the place of his sepulchre, till it was discovered in the reign of Henry the Second, contributed as much, perhaps, as his exploits, to render his name immortal. His return was prophesied, and ages after his decease, many of his countrymen confidently believed in his return.



Saxon Arms.

CHAPTER V.

Foundation of the Kingdoms of East Anglia, Essex, Bernice, Deira, and Mercia.

It was the Angles, a people descended from the same source as the Saxons, who finally assured to their countrymen the conquest of the island in the year 527. A portion of them, conducted by a leader named Uffa, landed on the north-east coast of Britain and formed a settlement, which gradually became consolidated into a kingdom under the title of East Anglia.

Soon afterwards the right bank of the Thames was invaded by fresh bands, who, assisted by their countrymen in Kent and by the Angles, drove the unfortunate Britons from the soil, and founded the kingdom of Essex, a state exceedingly small, but important, as comprising in its limits the city of London.

Attracted by the success of the adventurers who had gone before them, a great portion of the Angles, under the conduct of their warlike chief, Ida, and his twelve sons, decided on migrating to Britain. Landing between the Forth and the Tweed, and gradually advancing, they subjugated the entire country between the Humber and the Clyde, finding the Britons everywhere too much divided or enfeebled to oppose them.

The possessions which Ida acquired became the Saxon kingdom of Bernice; whilst Ælla, achieving the conquest of the states of Defyr, between the Tweed and the Humber, founded the seventh Saxon kingdom, which bore the name of Deira; and after a period of twenty-six years from the two last-mentioned states, established an eighth kingdom between the Trent and Wales, which was called Mercia.

There were successively established eight kingdoms of the Saxon race, forming an octarchy, though more generally known by the designation of the Heptarchy, in consequence of the union of the two states of Bernice and Deira, which reduced the number to seven.

A conquering people seldom exterminate the inhabitants of the country they succeed in subjugating, especially if they fix themselves in their new possessions. The Britons, although reduced to a state of servitude, deprived of their chiefs, and compelled to acquire the language of their masters, still continued to exist, retaining at the same time many of their ancient customs, which had considerable affinity with those of the Saxons, especially in the laws which regulated the possession of land, the government of families, and the administration of justice. Still their situation must have been insupportable, and thousands fled to Wales, which owed its independence quite as much to its natural advantages, as to the indisputable valour of its inhabitants, who were so passionately addicted to war, that when they had no foreign enemies to oppose, they quarrelled and destroyed each other. Thus was prepared the ruin of their independence, which they were destined, however, to preserve for a considerable period of time longer.

Many of the fugitive Britons landed in Gaul, where they were well received, and permitted to found a state, and gradually extended the name of Bretagne to the all but island of Armorica.

About the same period, a tribe of Saxons, who had been expelled from Germany, landed at a short distance from them, and built the city of Bayeux.

The religion of the Saxons, like that of most of the people of Germany, was a gross idolatry, founded on the worship of the powers of nature. Fire and water were personified in their goddess Hertha. Rheda was another

Before the arrival of the Saxons, Germanus, bishop of Auxerre, came twice into Britain, to extirpate the Pelagian heresy, that had taken deep root. He founded several schools, among which those of Dubricius, bishop of

Defeat of the Saxons by Arthur.

of their divinities; and to their great idol, Irminsal, they sacrificed human victims. Christianity suffered fearfully on the island from the ferocious superstition of the conquerors.

Llandaff, and Iltutus, a learned prelate, were the most famous. Dubricius had two schools, where he himself taught; one at Hensland, and another at Mockrost. Iltutus taught at Llan-twit. There was also at Bangor, in

Cambria, a famous monastery where youth were educated. Into the public service of the church Germanus also introduced the Gaulish rites and ceremonies.

St. Patrick, commonly called the apostle of Ireland, has the reputation of having converted that nation to Christianity, although there is great reason to believe that Anatolias and Palladius preached the gospel there before him.

Dubricius, archbishop of Caerleon, was illustrious for his piety, learning, and the above-mentioned schools; and lastly, for his synod at Brevi, in Cardiganshire, against the Pelagians.

Petse, a native of Cornwall, was celebrated for his religion and learning; he gave his name to Petse Stow, since corrupted into Padstow.

Gildas of Badon, or Bath, was scholar of Iltutus, and a monk of Bangor monastery. He was born in the year of the battle of Badon, according to Usher, in 520; other learned authorities contend, in 511. Gildas wrote a treatise, entitled "De Excidio Britanniæ," "Of the Destruction of Britain," wherein he boldly censures the British princes of his time, that is, those who, after the death of Arthur, divided the country into several petty states. From him chiefly it is that we know what passed among the Britons about the time he wrote, in 564. There is another history, or rather romance, under the name of Gildas, who is by some called Albanian, and supposed to be different from him now alluded to.

There is little doubt but the Christian prelates and priests were compelled to fly, wherever the Saxon supremacy was established; thus we find that Theon and Thodiac, archbishops of London and York, retreated into Wales. Gildas, speaking of the awful scenes of devastation which ensued, says:—"From the east to the west, nothing was to be seen but churches burnt and destroyed to their very foundations. The inhabitants were extirpated by the sword, and buried under the ruins of their own houses. The altars were daily profaned by the blood of those slain thereon." The Venerable Bede, of the same race as the conquerors, expresses himself yet more eloquently:—"By the hands of the Saxons a fire was lighted up in Britain, that served to execute the just vengeance of God upon the wicked Britons, as he had formerly burnt Jerusalem by the Chaldeans. The island was so ravaged by the conquerors, or rather by the hand of God making use of them as instruments, that there seemed to be a continual flame from sea to sea, which burnt up the cities, and covered the surface of the whole isle. Public and private buildings fell in one common ruin. The priests were murdered on the altars; the bishop with his flock perished by fire and sword, without any distinction, no one daring to give their scattered bodies an honourable burial."

In the midst of such harrowing scenes of murder and devastation, it is not to be wondered at that most records and chronicles which could have thrown light upon the early ages of the church in Britain were destroyed, and that a mutilated and imperfect history alone remains to us. Another and equal cause of the obscurity which exists is the changing of the names, not only of towns, but whole provinces, as they passed under the dominion of the Saxon yoke. The time, however, at last arrived when the conquerors themselves were to be converted to the faith they had trampled on; in little more than half a century all Britain was brought within the pale of Christianity. Austin was the first who preached the Gospel to the idolators in Kent, Paulinus to the Northumbrians, Birinus to the West Saxons, Wilfred to the South Saxons, Felix to the settlers in East Anglia; whilst other missionaries, equally zealous, succeeded in converting the inhabitants of the kingdom of Mercia.

CHAPTER VI.

Succession of Kings of Wessex till the Reign of Egbert, who first assumes the title of King of England.

The history of the earlier Saxon monarchs of Wessex is exceedingly obscure; of many, little more than the names are known. Cerdic, who arrived in Britain in 495, was crowned king of the West Saxons in 519, and died in 534, leaving his crown to his son Cenric. Cenric, who had greatly distinguished himself in the wars of his father, appears, after his accession to the throne, to have reigned in comparative peace. In 552 he fought a great battle, however, against the Britons, who had taken arms against him, and died in 560.

Ceaulin, his eldest son, succeeded him. This prince greatly added to his authority and possessions. He seized upon the kingdom of Sussex, after the death of Cissa, and was suspected of entertaining the ambitious project of reducing all England under his sceptre. This induced the other kings to form a confederacy against him, at the head of which was Ceolric. Being defeated, Ceaulin ended his days in obscurity.

Ceolric, his nephew, succeeded him; he died in 598.

This last named prince was followed by his brother Ceoluph, who defeated the South Saxons, and died in 611.

Cinigisil, the son of Ceolric, succeeded him; and divided the kingdom with his brother Quicelm.

The two last named princes obtained a great victory over the Britons, in 614. Before the death of Quicelm, which took place in 635, he became a Christian: after his decease the kingdom was again united under Cinigisil, also a Christian, who henceforth reigned alone.

Cenawalch, his son, had to carry on a succession of wars with the kings of Mercia. Penda, whose sister he had divorced, drove him from his kingdom, and he remained in exile several years, but was afterwards restored, dying in 672. He left his crown to his widow Saxburga.

This princess reigned little more than a year, when she died. Some historians contend she was deposed by her subjects, who disliked the idea of being commanded by a woman.

Cenfus for some time associated his son Escwin in the government, as well as Centwin, the brother of Cenawalch. On the death of the two former, the last named prince reigned alone. In 682 he defeated the Welsh.

Cedwalla succeeded him. During the life of his predecessor, who was jealous of the great affection which the people bore him, he had been compelled to fly. He carried on severe contests with Authun and Berthun, kings of Kent. He afterwards conquered the Isle of Wight; and would have rooted out all the inhabitants, but for the remonstrances of Wilfred, Bishop of Selsey.

In 688, he undertook a journey to Rome, to receive baptism at the hands of the pope; for although he was a Christian and a great zealot, he had never been baptised. As he travelled through France and Lombardy, he was everywhere very honourably received; and Cunibert, king

of the Lombards, was particularly remarkable for the noble entertainment he gave him. When he came to Rome, he was baptised by Pope Sergius II., who gave him the name of Peter. He had always expressed a wish to die soon after his baptism, and his desire was gratified, for he died a few weeks after, at Rome; and was buried at St. Peter's church, where a stately tomb was erected to his memory, with an epitaph showing his name, quality, age, and time of his death. His two sons being too young to succeed him, his cousin, Ina, mounted the throne.

Ina was one of the greatest of the monarchs of the Octarchy, and must have been in great favour with his countrymen, who proclaimed him king of the Anglo-Saxons; he carried on war with considerable success against the Cornish Britons, the South Saxons, the kings of Kent and Mercia.

The high character given of him by monkish writers is owing not so much to his military reputation as to his liberality and devotion to the church. He rebuilt Glastonbury, and added to the endowment of several other religious houses. Finally, he abdicated the crown, and retired to Rome, where he built the English College for students and ecclesiastics, and provided for the maintenance of the establishment by a tax of one penny, levied upon every family in England, and hence called "Peter's pence."

He also added a stately church to the college, and died a monk.

Adelard, the cousin of Ina, succeeded on the abdication of the latter, but not without a struggle. Oswald, a prince of the royal stock, disputed the crown with him; but his rival being defeated and slain, peace was restored. Adelard died in 740.

Cerdred: but little is known of this prince, beyond his defeat of the Britons in Cornwall, in 743. He was succeeded by his nephew Sigebert, whose cruelties drove his subjects to revolt. He was deposed, and died miserably.

Cenulph, who was most successful in his contests with the Britons; but, after a long reign, fell by the hands of Cunehard, the brother of his predecessor, against whose life he had conspired. The last named prince, aware of the enmity of the king, resolved to be beforehand with him; and, tracking him to the home of his mistress, attacked him with a numerous body of his followers, and killed him, despite the courageous defence he made, and the frantic entreaties of the woman to spare him. Cunehard was put to death by the friends of Cenulph, and Brethric, the son of the latter, placed upon the throne.

Egbert.

Brethric, who married Edburga, the daughter of Offa, king of Mercia, shortly after his accession became so suspicious of his cousin Egbert, a prince of the Saxon line, that he treated him harshly, and suddenly drove him from Britain to take refuge in France, where he was honourably received by Charlemagne. On the death of Brethric, who was poisoned by his queen, he returned to England, in

compliance with the request of his countrymen, who sent an embassy to him, offering him the crown. Shortly after his coronation, which took place at Winchester, he had to march against the Welsh, who were secretly plotting to throw off the yoke. On his approach, however, they submitted without risking a battle.

Not so the Danes, whose incursions about this time became frequent in the island. At first they were mere predatory expeditions, undertaken for plunder, and not made with any idea of forming a permanent settlement in the island. They were descended from the Goths and Swedes, and derived their name from Dan, who was one of, if not their very earliest king, after their separation from the parent stock.

Bound by a limited territory, in a climate where population rapidly increases, it is not to be wondered at that Denmark and Norway were overstocked with inhabitants, and, consequently, forced to send away large colonies. Their natural inclination to a sea-life made these exiles readily abandon their country; and the great booty the first adventurers gained tempted the richest and most powerful of their countrymen to urge their fortune in the same manner; to which end they entered into associations, and fitted out large fleets to seek and ravage foreign countries. These associations were much of the same nature with those formed in modern times by the corsairs of Barbary; and they became so entirely devoted to this mode of life, that very considerable fleets were put to sea. They had the authority and example of their highest leaders, who occasionally commanded them in person, for what they did. These leaders were known by the name of Sea-kings. Their fleets made great devastation in several parts of Europe, particularly France, England, and the Low Countries. In France they were called Normans, that is, men of the north; but in England they were generally styled Danes. There is no doubt that the Swedes and Goths very often joined with the Danes in their piratical expeditions; and it appears that the Frieslanders also were concerned with them in ravaging the coasts of France and England. The Saxon historians call them indifferently, Getes, Goths, Jutes, Norwegians, Dacians, Danes, Swedes, Vandals, and Frieslanders.

It was shortly after Egbert's expedition against the Welsh that he heard of the landing of a body of these marauders at Charmouth, in Dorsetshire, and hastened to meet them, believing that at his approach they would retire to their ships. In this calculation, however, he was disappointed, for the Danes not only stood their ground, but defeated him. The unfortunate monarch was compelled to fly, and owed his life to the darkness of the night. The conquerors, after plundering the country, retired.

Two years afterwards, a more considerable body landed in England, having been invited over by the Britons in Cornwall, who were anxious to throw off the Saxon yoke. This time Egbert was more fortunate; he defeated the invaders in a bloody battle at Hengistdun, and the island was for several years delivered from their presence.

Egbert died in 836, after having reigned thirty-six years, during the last ten, as sole monarch of England. He was succeeded by his son Ethelwulph, in whose reign the ravages of the Danes became yet more frequent. In a great battle fought at Charmouth, the English were once more defeated by their fierce enemy, who retired to their own country again with the spoils they had collected, without attempting any settlement.

The affection of this prince for his illegitimate son, Athelstan, induced him to resign to him the kingdoms of Kent, Essex, and Sussex, together with the title of King of the first-named place, reserving to himself that of King of all England, and the kingdom of Wessex.

The Danes now seldom failed to visit England yearly for the sake of plunder. In 845, the Earls Enulph and Osrick, aided by Bishop Alstan, obtained a considerable victory over them.

In 851, the barbarians landed again on the coast of Wessex, where they plundered the country to a great extent, but were met by Ethelwulph's general, Earl Ceorle, who defeated them at Wenbury, with great slaughter.

Shortly afterwards, Athelstan, the king of Kent, encountered them upon their own element, and succeeded in capturing nine of their ships.

Next year the Danes sailed up the Thames with three hundred vessels, and pillaged London, after which they marched into Mercia, and would have overrun all England if the preparations of Ethelwulph and his son, the king of Kent, had not deterred them. They repassed the Thames, and were defeated at Okely in Surrey.

Shortly after this victory, Athelstan died, and his father once more reigned as sole monarch of the Saxon kingdoms in the island.

Ethelwulph appears to have been in some respects a weak, but by no means a cruel prince; he was exceedingly religious, and guided for years, in all religious matters, by Swithin, Bishop of Winchester, and Alstan, Bishop of London. By the advice of the former, he is said to have granted to the church the tithe of all his dominions. He also sent his youngest son Alfred, when a mere boy, to Rome, and in 855 visited the Eternal City himself. On his return, he passed through France, where he married Judith, or Leatheta, as she is named in the Saxon Chronicles, the daughter of Charles the Bald, a princess only twelve years of age.

This unreasonable union so incensed his son Ethelbald and Bishop Alstan against him, that on his arrival in England he was compelled to resign the kingdom of Essex to the former to prevent a civil war. The aged monarch survived this partition but two years.

Ethelwulph, by his will, disposed of the kingdom of Kent to his second son Ethelbert, and the kingdom of Wessex to Ethelbald, Ethelred, and Alfred, in the order of seniority, and directed his heirs to maintain one poor person for every tithing in his hereditary lands. He died in 857, having reigned twenty-one years, leaving behind him four sons and one daughter, who was married to Buthred, king of Mercia, and died at Pavia in 888. Ethelbald, the eldest son, was already in possession of the kingdom of Wessex; and Ethelbert, his brother, succeeded to Kent, Essex, Surrey, and Sussex, comprised under the name of the kingdom of Kent.

Ethelbald, a prince of but little capacity, reigned not quite three years after his father's death, his brother Ethelbert succeeding him. In the reign of the last-named king, the Danes once more renewed their ravages in England, and penetrated as far as Winchester, from which city they were beaten back to their ships at Southampton by Osric and Ethelwulph, two Saxon earls.

On their landing, in the autumn of the same year, in the isle of Thanet, Ethelbert offered them a large sum of money to retire, which they promised to do, but broke faith with him, and commenced ravaging the kingdom of Kent, and carried off their booty in safety.

After a reign of six years, Ethelbert died, and was succeeded by his brother Ethelred, who, in virtue of his father's will, mounted the throne to the exclusion of the late monarch's children.

The reign of the new sovereign was short and unfortunate. He was continually engaged in repelling the incursions of the Danes, who began to entertain the design of making themselves masters of England. One of their leaders, Ivar, having informed himself of the state of the island, landed with his army on the coast of Wessex, and marched as far as Reading. Ethelred fought no less than nine battles with the invaders, and died of a wound which he received at Wittingham in 871.

During his reign the Danes plundered and destroyed the celebrated monasteries of Croyland, Ely, and Peterborough, as well as that of Coldingham.

Alfred, his brother, succeeded him.

CHAPTER VII.

Reign of Alfred the Great—Wars with the Danes, who finally obtain Settlements in the Country.

It is impossible to treat of the reign of a monarch to whom England owes so much, and whose memory is still revered, without feelings of respect and veneration commensurate with the benefits he conferred upon his countrymen, whose gratitude has accorded the noblest recompense in the power of a nation to bestow—the epithet of Great.

His predecessor, as we perceive, had left the affairs of the kingdom utterly disorganised, when Alfred, who hitherto had lived in comparative obscurity, succeeded him; but that obscurity had doubtless been favourable to the development of those rich qualities of mind, which, however luxuriant and promising the soil, require time and study to ripen and perfect.

The Danes, already masters of Northumbria and East Anglia, were in the very heart of the kingdom of Wessex; and, notwithstanding the many battles Ethelred had fought with them, they were in possession of several towns; and not only maintained their position in the island, but had reason to hope they should soon complete the conquest of it. The new monarch had only been a month on the throne, when he found himself obliged to take the field against these formidable enemies, who had advanced as far as Wilton; whither he marched to attack them. Victory for some time inclined to his side, then suddenly changed in favour of the Danes; but Alfred's loss was not so considerable as to make him despair, though the victory certainly belonged to the enemy. He laboured incessantly to put his army in condition to give them battle again, before they should be reinforced; they were astonished at his expedition, and, though victorious, sued for peace, finding themselves unable to continue the war. As they offered to march out of his dominions, on condition he would not molest them in any other part of England, Alfred accepted their offer, and gained by this treaty time to prepare against a new invasion.

The Danes, quitting Wessex, retired to London, which they had taken during the late war. Ivar was gone back to Denmark, having left the command of the army to his brother Hubba, who, being prevented from attacking Wessex, turned his arms against Mercia. Buthred, its king, knowing he was unable to resist, since Alfred was bound not to send him any succours, thought it his wisest course to buy off the Danes with a sum of money, and save his country from their depredations. Upon the receipt of the money, they marched towards Northumbria, designing to take up their quarters with their countrymen; but their provisions running short, in consequence of the devastations they themselves had made there, they were under the necessity of returning into Mercia. Before they had left Northumbria, they deposed Egbert, whom they had placed on the throne, and put Ricsige, a Danish earl, in his room. Buthred, finding they were come again into his dominions, complained of their breach of faith; but without regarding his complaints they obliged him to give them another considerable sum to save his country from the destruction it was threatened with; but no sooner was the money paid, than they fell to plundering and ravaging; and Buthred found that even his own person was in danger. The fear of falling into their hands obliged him to abandon his kingdom, and retire to Rome, where he spent the residue of his days in the English college. Mercia being thus left without a king, and Alfred being prevented by his own treaty from lending any assistance, the Danes without difficulty became masters of that kingdom, and raised Ceoluph, a servant of Buthred, to the throne, till they could otherwise dispose of it.

Aware of the slight tenure of his office, the new ruler resolved to make the utmost of his time; and so oppressed the unhappy Mercians that they suffered more from the tyranny of their own countryman than the rapacity of the conquerors.

Whilst Alfred flattered himself with the hope of enjoying comparative peace, new calamities were preparing for his unhappy country. A large party of Danes, under Halfden, landed in England, and surprised Warkam Castle, the strongest fortress in Wessex. The king was obliged to purchase his retreat. The invaders swore on the holy relics never again to set foot in Wessex—an oath which they quickly violated.

From the very nature of their government, no treaty could bind the Danes as a nation, seeing that it was composed of a variety of chiefs and petty powers, who entered into associations independent of each other. The successful return of one expedition merely proved an incentive to others of their countrymen to follow in their track.

Alfred, finding it was in vain to conclude treaties with such a perfidious race of people, resolved to take more effectual measures to secure himself from their treachery; and to this purpose convened a general assembly, and represented to them that they had nothing to trust to but their own valour and courage, to deliver them from their miseries; and urged upon them the absolute necessity of venturing their lives in defence of their country, and of sacrificing part of their estates to preserve the remainder. His eloquent remonstrances having produced the effect he expected, an army was immediately levied, with which he engaged the enemy seven times in one campaign; but as fortune was not equally favourable to him in all these engagements, he was once more constrained to treat with the invaders; and though he could have no great dependence upon their promises, it was the only way by which he

could put an end to a disastrous war. The new treaty, in which the Danes undertook not to return any more into Wessex, was somewhat better kept than the former one.

The West Saxons looked upon the retreat of these formidable enemies as a great deliverance; but they were yet far from the climax of their miseries. This band, which had struck them with such terror, were scarce gone, when a new swarm arrived, under the command of Rollo, the famous Norman general, who became afterwards the scourge of France. Fortunately, Alfred was in some measure prepared to receive them; and after several attempts, Rollo, despairing of procuring a settlement in England, resolved to go in quest of one in France.

Alfred the Great.

In all probability, finding the best part of England in possession of his countrymen, and Alfred ready to dispute the rest with him, he imagined he had a better prospect in that country. Some superstitious chroniclers inform us, it was revealed to Rollo in a dream that he should found a kingdom in France.

After his departure, Alfred enjoyed a repose, which afforded him leisure to revolve means to prevent these frequent invasions; and he ultimately determined to equip a fleet, and engage the Danes before they came to land, where they generally had the advantage; and as the latter had not contemplated being engaged at sea, their ships were only fit for transports, whereas those built by Alfred were constructed for warlike service. It was not long before he reaped the fruit of this wise precaution; for his fleet meeting with six Danish vessels, gave chase to them, and one of the largest being taken, the soldiers and mariners were thrown overboard; this first engagement was followed by a much more considerable one. A hundred and twenty sail of Danish transport ships making to the shore in order to land their men, the king's fleet attacked them, and sunk the greatest part of them; and the next year another Danish fleet sailing westward, met with so violent a storm, that all the ships perished, except a few which fell into the hands of the English.

Alfred, encouraged by these successes, resolved to attack the Danes in the west, where they had fortified themselves by the taking of Exeter, and where the Cornish men had always taken part with them; and he ultimately obliged them to give him hostages, and entirely abandon Wessex. They retired into Mercia, where they became confounded with the rest of their countrymen. A year before these events occurred, Halfden had elevated Egbert to the throne, in place of Recsige.

The invaders were in possession of three of the kingdoms of the Heptarchy; but it was insufficient to satisfy the hordes who were continually pouring in upon the devoted

island with the design of settling; and an expedition was consequently planned, with the greatest secrecy, against Wessex.

The attack took place so suddenly that Alfred was ill prepared to meet it. Chippenham was taken, and the dispirited Britons no longer felt courage to prosecute the war. Many fled, whilst others—and of them not a few—leagued themselves with the Danes, swearing allegiance to them.

support than his courage and patriotism, set forth a wanderer, alone, and on foot, in the kingdom he had so lately reigned over.

So great was his poverty, that the uncrowned king was compelled to solicit shelter in the hut of a neat-herd in the island Athelney, in Somersetshire, a remote spot, surrounded by a dangerous marsh, wild and desolate as his own fortunes, and only to be approached by a single path

The Murder of Cenulph, King of Wessex.

So general was the defection, that the unhappy monarch found himself deserted by all but a few domestics and faithful friends, who still adhered to his fallen fortunes. In this extremity, he showed himself greater, perhaps, than when on the throne; and acted with a prudence and wisdom which few princes would have found courage to imitate: he dismissed them all; and with no other

and that but little known. Here the fugitive had time to repair his shattered health, collect his thoughts, and meditate on plans for the future delivery of his oppressed and outraged country. Savage and uninviting as was his retreat, it afforded that which he had most need of—safety.

It is recorded, that whilst Alfred was an inmate of this

abode, the neat-herd's wife, having occasion to quit the cottage for a time, set him the task of watching the cakes of rye-bread which were baking on the fire. The king, whose mind was distracted by far more important subjects, neglected his instructions, and when the woman returned, she found the cakes blackened and burnt. If tradition speaks truly, the virago chid him soundly, reproaching him that he was more ready to eat than to work.

In this miserable concealment the fugitive remained six months, when fortune, tired of persecuting him, appeared to relent, and once more smiled upon the efforts of the brave, but hitherto unlucky, Saxons.

Hubba, who had been intrusted by his brother Ivar with the command of his troops, had invaded Wales, laying the country in flames, ravaging, and destroying. He afterwards penetrated into Devonshire, in the kingdom of Wessex, with a similar intent. At his approach the Earl of Devon retreated with a body of determined men to Kenworth Castle, on the river Taw, in order to withstand them.

The Danish chief was not long before he decided on attacking the fortress, believing that the scanty garrison would surrender at his first summons; in which opinion, however, he was doomed to find himself mistaken, for the Earl, finding that it was impossible to defend the place with so few men, however devoted, told them frankly that one only course was left for them, to conquer and live free men, or die beneath the swords of their relentless enemy. His harangue had the desired effect: the Saxons, animated by his words, sallied forth, and fell upon the Danes so unexpectedly, that before they could recover from their panic, their leader was slain; on seeing which, his followers fled in all directions.

The spot where Hubba fell, was afterwards called Hubblestain, or Hubblelaw, from the monument raised over his remains by his countrymen.

On hearing the joyful intelligence of this victory, Alfred left his concealment, and called his friends once more to arms. They assembled in separate bodies in various parts of the kingdom, establishing such means of communication as might enable them to join their forces together at the shortest notice.

The great difficulty was to ascertain the position of the enemy, which dangerous task the patriot king undertook himself. Disguised as a harper, he made his way into the Danish camp, and stayed there several days, secretly noting the disposition of their forces all the while. Having acquainted himself with all he wished to learn, Alfred returned to his countrymen, and named Selwood Forest for the general place of meeting. His directions were carried out so expeditiously, that in a comparatively brief space of time, the Saxon monarch was enabled to attack his enemy at the head of a powerful army, consisting of the inhabitants of Somersetshire, Wiltshire, and Hampshire. The Danes, though unexpectedly assailed, defended themselves with their usual bravery, but at last were entirely routed.

They attributed their defeat to the loss of the raven standard, which had been taken when Hubba fell, and to which they superstitiously attached magical powers—that it indicated victory and defeat by clapping or depressing its wings.

Alfred, taking advantage of the consternation thus struck into the whole body of resident Danes, compelled them to capitulate; and granted them terms more advantageous than they could have expected, resigning the lands of East Anglia to such who were willing to become Christians, and requiring those who were not, immediately to quit the island, with a promise never to return; hostages for the performance of which were to be given. Guthrun, chief of East Anglia, who since the death of Hubba had commanded the Danish army, agreed to these conditions and came to Alfred with thirty of his chief officers, having embarked all those who refused to be baptised.

Thus did the patriot king by a single battle recover his kingdom; and his subjects, whom fear had dispersed or constrained to submit to the enemy, flocked to him. All the historians agree, that he invested the Danish general with the title of King of East Anglia; but it is not known whether he did so by virtue of some private treaty made before, or with a view to engage him in his interests. The kingdom of East Anglia was now wholly inhabited by Danes, and Guthrun divided the lands among his countrymen, and exercised the regal authority as long as he lived.

It is to be observed, that at the time of the last battle there were in England two sorts of Danes; those who were already settled, and those who were endeavouring to procure themselves habitations. It was probably with the last that Alfred treated, as the former were anxious to be left in quiet possession of their settlements; and accordingly all those Danes settled in the three kingdoms of the Angles submitted quietly, and swore allegiance to him. But they were not all equally satisfied, as several had accepted the terms of the last treaty, only because they knew not whither to go, and became Christians to procure a subsistence, in expectation of a favourable opportunity to return to their old course of life. That this was the case appeared from what followed. When it was least expected, the most considerable among them, headed by Hastings, earnestly solicited Guthrun to renew the war in Wessex; but not prevailing, they put to sea, and ravaged the coast of Flanders; and shortly after, another, and no less numerous troop, informed of the great booty the first expedition had met with in Kent, embarked to join them. These two bands thus united overran Brabant, Hainault, Flanders, Picardy, and Artois, perpetrating unheard-of cruelties; after which, having again divided into two bodies, one of them sailed back to England, in hopes of plundering the country, where they imagined they should come unexpected. Having landed in Kent, they marched towards Rochester, with design to surprise that city; but Alfred, who, contrary to their expectation, had his army in readiness, hastened to meet them upon the first notice of their arrival, and his approach was sufficient to make them fly to their ships with such precipitation that they left their plunder behind them. His vigilance having prevented their designs upon England, they returned to France, and rejoining their companions, continued their devastations in that kingdom.

Hitherto the English had only acted on the defensive. Exposed to the continual invasions of the Danes, and uncertain where the enemy would land, they were generally surprised before it was in their power to defend themselves; and the sea-coast being uninhabited, there was nothing to prevent the piratical marauders from landing unopposed. Alfred's first care, therefore, was to equip a considerable fleet, the advantage of which he had already experienced, with which he determined to cruise along the coasts, and

attack all Danish ships laden with booty. Sixteen were surprised in the port of Harwich, in East Anglia, part of which were captured and the remainder sunk; and a considerable booty was also obtained. Guthrun, incensed at this act of hostility in one of his harbours, suffered the parties aggrieved to endeavour to retrieve their losses, and even furnished them with means; and it was not long before they found an opportunity of attacking and gaining some advantage over Alfred's ships. The Saxon fleet, however, in general maintained the superiority, and kept the Danes in awe.

The king having thus secured the sea-coasts, fortified the kingdom with castles and walled towns; repairing those that had gone to ruin, and building others in so strong a manner that they could not easily be assaulted; and as London, considerable both for its size and situation, remained in the hands of the Danes, and gave them a passage into Wessex, he resolved to invest it, and the besieged were in a little time obliged to capitulate. He is said to have added both to its strength and beauty, and committed the government of it to Ethelred, who had married his daughter Elfleda, or rather gave it him, with the title of Earl of Mercia. Some historians say that he conferred on him the dignity of king; but there appears to be no authority for such an assertion. The creating Ethelred Earl of Mercia did not invest him with power, except in London, all the rest of the province being in possession of the Danes, over whom he exercised a titular authority. Having some repose from the turmoils of war, Alfred occupied himself for several years in fortifying the towns in his dominions, a precaution which served not only to repel any future attempts of their enemies, but to keep those who had already settled on the island within the limits assigned them.

This state of peace lasted for twelve years, during which time the patriot monarch had time to attend to the amelioration of the laws, and other improvements necessary for the well-being of his subjects.

The Danes, who, under the conduct of their chief, the celebrated Hastings, had ravaged France and the Low Countries, where they acquired immense booty, having been twice defeated by Eudes and Arnulph, the kings of France and Germany, decided on returning to England, not with the intention of settling there, but led by the thirst of plunder. Dividing their forces into equal parts, they set sail for the island. The first expedition reached the coast of Kent, where they landed and committed dreadful depredations. The second, under the command of Hastings, entered the Thames and landed at Middleton.

Alfred, who appears to have been in East Anglia at the time of this new invasion, no sooner received the intelligence than he drew together what troops he could; and, after receiving the oaths of the Anglian Danes, marched against the new comers, and defeated the enemy, who were laying siege to Exeter.

We have no very distinct accounts of the wars which ensued. The Danes, under the command of Hastings, returned to France, perhaps on account of the plague which, about this time, was committing great ravages in the island.

The terror which the name of this chief inspired had armed all the sea-coasts of France against him. On discovering which he resolved to change his course, and steer for the Mediterranean, where he contrived, by an act of sacrilege and deceit, to become master of the town of Luna, on the coast of Tuscany.

He pretended that he had merely visited the place in order to gratify his desire of becoming a Christian, and actually received baptism from the bishop. Some little time after he caused the simple prelate to be informed that he was dead, and had left a large sum of money on condition of his being buried in the church of Luna. By this stratagem Hastings and a considerable number of his followers obtained entrance into the town, under pretence of conducting the funeral, and immediately began to massacre and pillage the inhabitants.

The adventurer ultimately settled in the city of Chartres, which Charles the Simple, King of France, assigned to him as the price of peace.

The laws, during the war, had been very much neglected, and were become almost unknown to the people. Alfred made a collection of the best he could find. He inserted some of the judicial laws of the Old Testament, and several of those formerly enacted by Ina, king of Wessex, and Offa, king of Mercia, in their respective kingdoms; and to these he added many of his own, adapted to the circumstances of his people. Throughout these laws may easily be observed an ardent zeal for justice, and a sincere desire of rooting out oppression and violence. They were indeed mild, if compared with those of later ages, seeing they punished most offences by mulcts and fines; but the strictness wherewith Alfred caused them to be observed, counterbalanced their lenity. If with respect to private persons the rigour of the law was somewhat abated, it was not so with regard to unjust magistrates; for to such Alfred was ever inexorable; and history informs us that he executed four-and-forty judges within the space of one year, for corruption.

These precautions seemed to be sufficient to hinder the poor and the defenceless from being oppressed by the rich and great. But as Alfred was sensible the spirit of tyranny grew upon men in authority, he studied to prevent that injustice; and, to that end, ordered, that in all criminal actions, twelve men, chosen for that purpose, should determine concerning the fact, and the judge give sentence according to their verdict. This privilege, enjoyed by the English to this day, is doubtless the noblest and most valuable that subjects can have; an Englishman accused of any crime is to be tried only by his peers, that is, by persons of his own rank. These twelve men, chosen out of many others, with the approbation of the person accused, are called by the collective name of jury; and these are properly the persons by whom the life or death of the prisoner is determined.

About this time also, Alfred divided all England into shires—so-called from the Saxon word *scyre*, to divide—and counties; the shires and counties again into hundreds, which were subdivided into tithings, to which the inhabitants were obliged to belong under pain of being treated as vagabonds.

He also invited over from foreign countries learned men, to whom he gave pensions, and dispersed them in the several dioceses, to instruct the people; and not satisfied with this, and desirous of having in his own kingdom a nursery of learning, he founded four schools or colleges at Oxford. In the first, the abbot Neot and Grimald read

divinity; in the second, Asserius, a Benedictine monk, taught grammar and rhetoric; in the third, John, a monk of St. David's, set up a chair for logic, arithmetic, and music; and in the fourth, Johannes Scotus professed geometry and astronomy.

We find also among the learned men encouraged by Alfred, Plegmund, a Mercian, who became archbishop of Canterbury, and many others. It is unnecessary to stay to examine whether the colleges founded by Alfred were the first foundations of the University of Oxford, or whether, before that, there were at a place called Grecklade similar schools, which were removed from thence to this city. It is enough to observe that, from very small foundations, the University of Oxford has advanced to its present state.

All resolutions relating to the public Alfred governed with the advice and assistance of the general council or assembly of the nation, called in Saxon Wittena-Gemot, to which rank and office gave a right to sit, and which was independent of the king. This assembly, styled at present the parliament, a name taken from the French, was composed of the two archbishops of Canterbury and York, the bishops, earls, viscounts, or high-sheriffs of the counties, and the thanes of the first rank, or barons.

Alfred in the Neat-herd's Hut.

Whilst Alfred lay concealed in the Isle of Athelney, he made a vow to dedicate to God the third part of his time, as soon as he should be restored to a state of tranquillity. He performed his promise, and allotted eight hours every day to acts of devotion, eight hours to public affairs, and as many to sleep, study, and necessary refreshment; and as the use of clocks and hour-glasses was not yet introduced

into England, he measured the time by means of wax-candles, marked with circular lines of different colours, which served as so many hour-lines; and to prevent the wind from making them burn unsteady, it is said he invented the expedient of enclosing them in lanterns.

He also divided his revenues in two parts, one of which was wholly assigned for charitable uses, and subdivided into four portions. The first for alms to the poor; the second for the maintenance of the monasteries he had founded; the third for the subsistence of the professors and scholars at Oxford; the fourth for poor monks, foreigners, as well as English. The other half was divided into three divisions: one was expended in his family; another in paying his architects, and other curious workmen; and the rest was bestowed in pensions upon strangers invited to his court for the encouragement and instruction of his subjects. This monarch is justly distinguished with the surname of Great; and all historians unanimously represent him as one of the noblest that ever wore a crown. It is, however, said that in the commencement of his reign he was subject to great violence of temper; that he was haughty towards his subjects, and indulged the impetuosity of his passions so much, indeed, as to draw down the censure of his kinsman, St. Neot.

He died in 901, in the fifty-third year of his age, after a reign of twenty-nine years and six months, the greatest part of which was spent in war.

CHAPTER VIII.

Reign of Edward the Elder—Continuation of the War with the Danes—Elfrida—War with the Welsh.

At the accession of Edward, the son of Alfred, England was nearly equally divided between the Saxons and the Danes. The former still possessed the important kingdom of Wessex, which included Essex, and most of the territory to the south of the Thames. Mercia was inhabited by a mixed population, in which, however, the English race predominated. Their enemies predominated in the east and north of the island.

Both parties began to be weary of war—of mutually destroying each other, and a brief repose was welcome. To the new settlers the retreat of their countrymen was as acceptable as to the Saxons; for the hordes who invaded the island with no other object than obtaining plunder, were little scrupulous which possessions they ravaged; and the consequence was, that the Danes suffered at times as much as the earlier possessors of the soil.

Edward had not long obtained possession of the crown before a civil war broke out, which ultimately strengthened the Saxons as a nation. Alfred's elder brother, Ethelbert, left two sons, the eldest of whom, Ethelward, having arrived at man's estate, claimed the throne, on the plea that his grandfather, Ethelwulph, had no right to make a will, leaving the succession to his three sons, according to their seniority, to the exclusion of their issue—a claim which, in these days, would undoubtedly be looked upon as valid. A numerous party supported his pretensions, and Edward was compelled to draw the sword to maintain himself in his inheritance.

Defeated in his first attempt, the pretender fled to the Danes, who received him hospitably, and, seeing the use which such an instrument might be made of in their hands, at once proclaimed him King of Wessex.

In this crisis Edward proved himself worthy of his illustrious father, and acted with a promptitude and decision which ultimately secured to him his crown. Immediately after the battle of Wimborne, in which he had defeated his rival, he marched against him and his new allies, his army increasing daily. The Danes, unable to resist the overwhelming forces led against them, dismissed the pretender from amongst them, and ceded several strongholds as the price of peace.

In the year 915, according to some historians, Edward founded the University of Cambridge; others contend for a yet earlier date, an assumption, however, resting on tradition merely. They attribute it to one Cantaber, three hundred years before the Christian era.

In 910 the war between the two races broke out once more, and lasted, with brief intermission, for ten years; when the Danes, finding they were losing ground, sued for peace. Those who inhabited Mercia were the first to submit, the East Anglians followed their example, and the Northumbrians were the last.

Edward was materially assisted in these struggles by his warlike sister Elfleda, the widow of the Earl of Mercia, who, despite her sex, appears to have delighted in arms. Aided by her brother's troops, she attacked the Welsh, who had sided with the Danes, and obliged them to pay tribute to her.

On the death of this princess, the Welsh threw off the yoke, and made a desperate effort to regain their freedom. They entered into an alliance with the Danes; but on the defeat of the latter Edward marched against them, vanquished Rees ap Madoc, their king, and once more reduced them to become tributaries.

Although Edward equalled his illustrious predecessor in military talents, and was much more fortunate in all his undertakings, he was far inferior to him in virtue, having several concubines; his son by one of these, named Egwina, ultimately succeeded him.

Concerning this woman, the chroniclers relate that she was the daughter of a shepherd, and, whilst watching her father's flock, fell asleep in the fields, and had an extraordinary dream. She dreamt that a globe of light, resembling the moon, shone out from her body, and that all England was illuminated by it. This she related to Edward's nurse, who was so struck by it that she adopted her, gave her a good education, and purposely threw her in the way of the king, by whom she had three children, Athelstan, Alfred, and a daughter named Editha.

Edward had four other sons and several daughters. The eldest son, Elfward, died at Oxford a few days after his father, and Edward, the second, perished miserably. Edmund and Eldred, Edward's sons by Edgiva, both lived to reign in England.

Of the daughters several married, and the rest devoted themselves to a religious life. Elfleda, the eldest, was abbess of Ramsey; Ogina married Charles the Simple, king of France; Edilda became a nun. Another sister of the same name was the wife of Hugh, earl of Paris, whose son, Hugh Capet, afterwards became so celebrated. Edgeth was the wife of Otho, the German emperor, and Edgiva queen of Louis the Blind, king of Provence. Another sister, named Edburga, became a nun.

It was during the reign of Edward that the famous adventurer Rollo, who had led a band of Normans into

France, compelled Charles the Simple to confirm him in the new possession of Neustria, and bestow on him the hand of his daughter Gisella in marriage. The only condition the feeble monarch ventured to exact was that the barbarian should be baptised, a ceremony to which Rollo readily submitted, and assumed the title of Duke of Normandy, holding his possessions as a fief from the crown of France.

Massacre of Christian Priests by the Danish Invaders.

CHAPTER IX.

Reign of Athelstan—Conspiracy against him—Appeal to the Pope—Death of his Brother Edwin.

Athelstan's Ring.

Elfward, the eldest legitimate son of Edward, having survived his father but a few days, and his brothers being under age, Athelstan, the son of the concubine Egwina, ascended the throne, to the secret discontent of many of the nobility and clergy, who were opposed to him from the illegitimacy of his birth, and a conspiracy was soon entered into to dethrone the new monarch, and raise the young prince Edwin in his place.

Alfred, the chief of the conspirators, had even taken private measures to seize Athelstan at Winchester, and put out his eyes. The plot being discovered, he was apprehended by the king's order, but would confess nothing; he obstinately persisted in protesting his innocency, and offered to purge himself by oath in the presence of the pope, an ordeal looked upon in that age as infallible in discovering the truth, since he who was rash or wicked enough to forswear himself, was certain, according to the superstition of the time, to meet with a signal punishment. Athelstan agreed to this and sent him to Rome, to take the oath before Pope John. Perhaps he was unwilling to begin his reign with blood, or, as the sequel proved, had taken effectual means to prevent his returning; for, shortly after the arrival of the accused in Rome, word was sent that Alfred, having sworn to his innocence before the pope, suddenly fell into a fainting fit, which lasting three days, ended with his life; and that the pope, convinced by his death that he had committed perjury, had ordered his body to remain in the English college till the king's pleasure should be known. Upon which, Athelstan, pleased with being thus rid of his enemy, consented he should have Christian burial: his lands were, however, confiscated, and given to Malmesbury monastery, and the king had inserted in the grant an account of the whole conspiracy, "to testify to the world that he dedicated to God what was his own."

The death of Edward, and the troubles which succeeded, affording the Danes, as they imagined, a favourable oppor-

tunity to revolt, they had begun to take such measures as obliged Athelstan to march into their country; but as they had not yet drawn their forces together, they were so surprised by the arrival of the king on their frontiers, that, without endeavouring to defend themselves, they returned to their allegiance; and Sithric, one of their kings, sued for peace, upon whatever terms the king might be pleased to impose. Athelstan being desirous to live in peace with the Danes, in order that he might have time to establish himself in the throne, not only pardoned his revolt, but gave him his sister Editha in marriage, on condition that he would receive baptism.

The Ecclesiastical Council. (See p. 44.)

The dissensions in the north being appeased, he returned to Wessex, where he soon afterwards heard of the death of

Sithric, who left two sons, Anlaff and Godfrid, by a former marriage. Athelstan, instead of disbanding his army, instantly retraced his march, and the two princes only avoided falling into his hands by a hasty flight, which gave him an opportunity of making himself master of all Northumbria, except the castle of York, which alone held out against him.

Although he had taken the precaution of placing garrisons in most of the cities, the conqueror was far from feeling himself secure in his new possessions. The sons of Sithric were still at liberty, as well as Reginald, another Danish prince, who had fled with them. It was not known what had become of the latter. Anlaff had fled to Ireland, whilst his brother, Godfrid, had found an asylum with the king of Scotland, Constantine, whom Athelstan immediately summoned to deliver him into his hands. Constantine being perfectly aware that he was not in a position to refuse anything to the victor at the head of a powerful army, promised to deliver the prince into his hands, and give him a meeting at Dacor; but whilst he was preparing for his journey, Godfrid made his escape, either through the negligence or connivance of Constantine, who, however, met Athelstan, accompanied by Eugenius, king of Cumberland. Athelstan admitted Constantine's excuses for the Danish prince's escape; but, if the English historians are to be credited, obliged both the kings to do homage for their kingdoms.

Before Athelstan quitted the north, Godfrid made an attempt upon York, by means of the castle, where he had still some friends; but failing in the attempt, he put to sea, where for a long time he exercised piracy; and when wearied with that way of life, surrendered himself to the king of England, who received him kindly, and allowed him a handsome pension.

Anlaff, a prince of greater abilities than his brother, took better measures for his restoration. He had, as we have observed, retired into Ireland, where, being informed that the king of Scotland was displeased with Athelstan, he believed he might make use of the opportunity to persuade him to espouse his cause. To that end he passed over into Scotland, and intimated to Constantine that he had reason to fear the worst from the king of England; and represented to him that Athelstan, having by surprise seized upon Northumbria, without the least right, might proceed in the same manner with regard to Scotland, and therefore it was absolutely necessary to prevent him. To this he added the offer of a powerful aid from Ireland, assuring him, with that increase of strength, he might easily drive Athelstan out of Northumbria, and free himself from a troublesome and dangerous neighbour, by restoring that kingdom to the Danes, who would serve as a barrier against England. Anlaff found no great difficulty to prevail with the king of Scotland, who, besides being secretly exasperated at the arrogant reception he had met with, yielded readily to his suggestions, and incited the Welsh to keep the Saxon monarch engaged, whilst he and his new ally should invade Northumbria.

Athelstan, by his expedition, defeated all the measures of the king of Scotland; and directly he was informed of the motions of the Welsh, and the aid sent them by Constantine, he marched into Wales, and, giving Howel battle, obtained a complete victory; and, in consequence of his victory, he augmented the tribute paid by that prince to England.

This war being thus happily concluded, Athelstan approached the borders of Scotland, to revenge himself on Constantine for assisting the Welsh. As soon as he passed over the borders he took some towns, and gave the Scots reason to dread more considerable losses. As Anlaff had not yet arrived with the promised supplies, Constantine durst not venture to engage alone in a war against a powerful enemy, who had already advanced so far in his dominions, and was in a condition to carry his conquests so much further. To gain time, therefore, until the Irish joined him, he sued for peace; and Athelstan readily granted his request, being extremely desirous to make that prince his friend, for fear he should countenance the insurrections of the Northumbrians. For this reason he restored to him all the places he had conquered in Scotland, in hopes of cementing, by this liberality, an alliance it was then so much his interest to cultivate. Some historians, however, affirm Athelstan obliged Constantine to do him homage for Scotland; but the Scots peremptorily deny this, nor is there any good authority for the assertion.

Athelstan's generosity was not sufficient to prevent Constantine from pursuing the execution of his first projects. He rather hastened his preparations the more, being indignant that he was compelled to receive obligations from one whom he always considered as a most bitter enemy. Athelstan, meanwhile, had returned into Wessex, in the full hope of enjoying the repose which he expected his successes would have secured him. But he met with domestic calamities which gave him more anxiety than all the wars he had been engaged in.

One of those fawning flatterers, who are the curse of courts, persuaded the king that his legitimate brother Edwin was secretly conspiring against him. This accusation Athelstan, aware of the defect in his title to the crown, unhappily gave ear to, and affected to believe the charge, whether he did or not. The prince was arrested by his unnatural brother, who, fearing to put him to death publicly, had him conveyed on board a vessel without sails or rudder, and ordered it to be let drift away to sea.

It was in vain that Edwin protested his innocence. Athelstan was inexorable; the prince's real crime was in his birth, and that was the one the jealous monarch punished.

Edwin, to avoid perishing by hunger, cast himself into the waves, and was drowned.

No sooner was the object of his terror removed for ever, than remorse seized upon the murderer; who, to quiet his conscience, founded the Abbey of Middleton, in Dorsetshire, where masses were daily offered for the repose of the victim's soul.

Edwin's accuser had not reason long to rejoice at the success of his malicious calumnies; for one day as he waited at table with the king's cup, one of his feet slipping, he would have fallen, had he not by the nimbleness of the other recovered himself. Whereupon he jokingly said, "See how one brother helps another;" which senseless jest cost him his life; as Athelstan, who overheard it, and considered it as a covert reproach addressed to himself, ordered him to be immediately executed; and thus, says the old chronicler, revenged his brother's death by that of his false accuser.

Whilst these things were passing at court, Constantine continued his preparations for the execution of the project concerted between him and Anlaff. The latter, whom some

groundlessly style king of Ireland, had contrived to engage in the league the Irish, Welsh, and Northumbrian Danes, who ardently desired to have a king of their own nation on the throne. Anlaff appeared as head of this league, though Constantine was no less concerned in it, the war being carried on chiefly at his expense. The project was managed so privately, that Anlaff entered the Humber with a fleet of six hundred sail, and invaded Northumbria before Athelstan had any intelligence of his landing; and with such forces, and the assistance of the Danes settled there, he easily became master of several small ill-guarded towns; but the fortified places that were well garrisoned by the English stopped his progress, and gave Athelstan time to draw his army together; who used such expedition, that he surprised the two confederate princes upon their march towards Bernicia. It had been agreed that this small kingdom, if conquered, should be apportioned to the king of Scotland; but the prompt measures of Athelstan, by surprising the invaders, totally defeated their plans. The two armies met at Brunanburgh, where a bloody battle was fought, in which victory finally declared for Athelstan; and the allies lost Constantine, king of Scotland, six Irish and Welsh kings, and twelve earls and general officers. This victory was chiefly owing to the valour of Turketul, the king's cousin, who was afterwards abbot of Croyland. The abbey over which this soldier-priest presided was subsequently destroyed by the Danish invaders, the priests being massacred at the altar as they were singing their aves.

Previous to the battle of Brunanburgh, it is recorded that Anlaff visited the camp of Athelstan in the disguise of a harper, in the same manner as the immortal Alfred had done; that he was recognised by a soldier, who had formerly served him, and permitted to depart. The man, it is said, afterwards confessed what he had done to the king, who generously forgave him, but, at the same time, took the precaution of changing his quarters.

That same night the camp was attacked by the Danes, and a prelate, who had pitched his tent on the same spot where Athelstan's had stood, was slain with his followers.

Athelstan survived his victory three years, and died a natural death in 941, being then forty-six years old, and having reigned sixteen.

Amongst all his works of piety, which consisted chiefly in building and endowing monasteries, there is one act of usefulness which must not be passed over in silence: he caused the Scriptures to be translated into the Saxon tongue, the one generally in use in the island; and appears to have been exceedingly anxious that they should be well done, employing for that purpose the most learned scholars in his kingdom. Though he seemed to be entirely engrossed by military affairs, he found time to cause justice and civil government to flourish in his dominions; which is proved by the excellent laws he, from time to time, added to those of Alfred, his grandfather. From such of his laws as are still extant, it appears that his intent was to create an equality in civil and religious immunities, that he was exceedingly opposed to the privileges the clergy had so much increased, and which he found served only to authorise wickedness, and prove a sanctuary for crime.

The famous Dunstan, who afterwards carried the ecclesiastical power to such a height in England, that it equalled, if it did not surpass that of the crown, was born in his reign.

To form a proper estimate of the character of Athelstan, we must take into consideration, not only the time in which he lived, but the peculiarity of his position. The former was at an age when the strong hand gave right, and men regarded success rather than the means by which it was achieved, when the ceaseless warfare familiarised the nation with deeds of cruelty and oppression. The crime for which historians have most reproached him, was the murder of his brother Edwin.

The difficulty of his position arose from his illegitimacy. Having no lineal claim to the crown, many of the nobility felt humiliated at being governed by a monarch whose birth they considered to be beneath their own. Hence, many acts of cruelty, unceasing jealousy, and suspicion, which had otherwise been avoided.

Ecclesiastical writers have spoken well of him. Policy, as well as inclination, rendered it necessary for him to conciliate the good opinion of the church, to which he was a liberal benefactor, founding several monasteries and religious houses. This, in an age when priests were the chief if not only historians, secured for the usurper a better reputation in all probability than he merited.

As a military leader, he appears to have been possessed of great courage, no ordinary resolution, and considerable skill. The rapidity of his marches frequently astonished the Danes, who lost ground in the island during his reign; whilst his successes against the Scots were equally remarkable.

Although he left male issue, none were old enough to succeed him; and Edmund, the eldest legitimate surviving son of his father, succeeded him. He was a mere youth, and not destitute of spirit, but far too young and inexperienced to carry out successfully the warlike policy of his predecessor, on whose death the Danes, Scots, and Welsh once more began to entertain thoughts of retaliation, and freedom from the yoke so successfully imposed.

The events to which these aspirations naturally gave rise will be found recorded in the succeeding reign.

CHAPTER X.

Edmund I.—His brief Reign and Death.

Edmund was only eighteen years of age when he succeeded to the crown of his illegitimate brother, whose activity and vigour had secured to England for several years before his death a profound repose. The Welsh paid their tribute with the utmost regularity; the Danes, who had so frequently experienced his prowess, desired no better than to remain at peace; and the unfortunate Anlaff, who, after the defeat of his hopes, had once more retired to Ireland during the reign of his conqueror, never renewed his attempts.

No sooner was it known, however, that Athelstan was dead, and a mere youth upon the throne, than the Danes prepared to revolt; the opportunity of carrying out their long-projected scheme of the conquest of the island appeared too favourable to be overlooked.

Anlaff, who was informed of all that passed, deemed that the time was come for the prosecution of his claims, and entered into a treaty with Olaus, king of Norway, for assistance, which being liberally granted, he once more appeared in his father's kingdom of Northumbria, and

obtained possession of York, the inhabitants opening the gates to him.

This example being followed by most of the neighbouring towns, the long-exiled prince soon found himself in a position to carry the war into Mercia, where his countrymen received him as a deliverer, and by their united efforts many strong places were recovered, which Edward had taken from them.

Edmund, though both young and inexperienced, appears to have inherited the courage of his race. The success of the enemy, instead of depressing him, rendered him more eager for battle: he marched at once to the north, and Anlaff, with equal confidence, advanced to meet him.

A battle was fought between these rival princes near Chester, in which success was so equally balanced, that it was impossible to say on which side it preponderated.

The archbishops of York and Canterbury, to avoid any further effusion of blood, prevailed upon the parties to make peace. Anlaff was permitted to retain possession of the kingdom of Northumbria, whose limits were considerably increased.

The Northumbrians had not reason long to rejoice at the restoration of Anlaff, which they had so ardently desired; for this prince, having contracted a large debt with the king of Norway for the troops he had lent him, was anxious to pay it; and to this end laid heavy taxes on the people, by which he forfeited their affection. The inhabitants of the ancient kingdom of Deira were the first that revolted, and having sent for Reginald, his brother Godfrid's son, crowned him king at York.

Reginald was no sooner on the throne, than he armed against his uncle, who was also preparing to dispossess him. The quarrel between these two kings incited Edmund to march towards the north at the head of an army, to appease the troubles there, being apprehensive they might give occasion to the foreign Danes to return into England. He arrived upon the borders of Northumbria, when the uncle and nephew, wholly intent upon their private quarrel, thought of nothing less than repulsing the English. He probably might with ease have made himself master of that kingdom; but he was satisfied with procuring peace between the two kings, in such a manner that Reginald was to keep the crown he had lately received; but at the same time, Edmund obliged them both to swear allegiance to him, and be baptised, himself standing godfather.

This forced peace did not last long, and Edmund had hardly returned into Wessex, when the two Danish princes took up arms to free themselves from his yoke, having engaged the Mercian Danes and the king of Cumberland to espouse their quarrel. Whereupon Edmund immediately marched into Mercia, and before the Danes there could be joined by the Northumbrians, took from them Leicester, Stafford, Derby, Nottingham, and some other places of less note; and then advancing with the same expedition towards Northumbria, he surprised the two kings before they had drawn their forces together. This sudden attack threw the Northumbrians into such disorder, that their rulers, fearing to fall into the hands of Edmund, believed it their only refuge to abandon the island, where they could not possibly remain in safety, so closely were they pursued; as their flight deprived the Danes of all hopes of withstanding Edmund, they threw down their arms, and gave him allegiance.

Before he returned to Wessex, Edmund resolved to punish the king of Cumberland, who, without cause, had taken part with the Danes; and he easily subdued that petty kingdom, whose forces bore no proportion to his own, and presented it to the king of Scotland, in order to attach him to his interest, and prevent him from again assisting the Northumbrians; reserving, however, the sovereignty of it, and obliging that king to do him homage, and appear at the court of England at the time of the solemn festivals, if summoned. This, perhaps, is what gave occasion to the assertion, subsequently made, that from thenceforward the kings of Scotland were vassals to the kings of England. They were certainly so with regard to Cumberland; but it does not appear that they ever did homage for the kingdom of Scotland.

Edmund was not wholly employed in military affairs; and there are some of his laws still in being which demonstrate how desirous he was of the people's welfare and happiness. Having observed that pecuniary punishments were not sufficient to put a stop to robberies, which were generally committed by people who had nothing to lose, he ordered, that in gangs of robbers, the oldest of them should be condemned to be hung; which was the first law in England that made it death to rob or steal.

Probably this prince would have rendered his people happy, had his reign been longer; but a fatal accident robbed him of his life. One day, as he was solemnising a festival at Pucklekirk, in Gloucestershire, Leolf, a notorious robber, though banished the kingdom for his crimes, had the effrontery to enter and seat himself at one of the tables in the hall where the king was at dinner. Edred, the king's brother, enraged at his insolence, commanded him to be apprehended; but perceiving he was drawing his dagger to defend himself, the king himself leaped up in great fury, and catching hold of him by the hair, dragged him out of the hall; and whilst he was wholly intent upon venting his furious passion, Leolf stabbed him in the breast with his dagger, so that he immediately expired upon the body of his murderer. Thus died King Edmund in 948, in the twenty-fifth year of his age, and the eighth of his reign. By Elgiva, his wife, he had two sons, Edwy and Edgar, who did not succeed him, on account of their minority; Edred, his brother, being placed on the throne by the unanimous consent of the clergy and nobility.

During his reign Dunstan began to distinguish himself; being in great favour with Edmund, who made him abbot of Glastonbury.

CHAPTER XI.

Reign of Edred—War with the Northumbrians—The Monastery of Glastonbury rebuilt—St. Dunstan—Death of Edred.

EDRED was a mere youth when he succeeded to the crown, a circumstance which the Northumbrians were not slow to take advantage of, and instantly attempted to throw off their allegiance; but after a variety of contests they were ultimately subdued, and Earl Osulph appointed to govern them. The last mentioned personage, who was an Englishman, appears to have acted with no less vigour than prudence, erecting many strong-holds, and placing efficient garrisons within them, to keep the natives of the newly-conquered province in subjection. These methods were so efficacious that Northumbria remained for a long

time tranquil: in fact, till the Danes, by the chance of war, once more repossessed themselves of it.

The young king, perfectly master of his own kingdom, and respected by the Scots, had now time to direct his attention to religious affairs, in which he was entirely guided by the abbot of Glastonbury, Dunstan, whom he had made High Treasurer, and at whose instigation he undertook to rebuild the monastery with great magnificence.

Such was the influence which this not very humble-minded ecclesiastic exercised over him, that he even submitted to be scourged by him by way of penance for his sins.

It was in this reign that the first great division arose between the regular and secular clergy.

The monks, contrary to the laws of the kingdom, prevailed on the king through Dunstan to induct them into ecclesiastical benefices, a proceeding which caused great dissatisfaction throughout the realm. But such was the influence of the abbot that the malcontents were obliged to smother their hatred till the reign of Edred's successor.

Grateful for the benefits procured through the patronage of Dunstan, the monkish writers were lavish in their praises of their patron; declared that he was a saint, had divine revelations, and frequently worked miracles.

Edred appears to have died suddenly, certainly before the completion of the new abbey of Glastonbury, after a reign of ten years. It is reported that Dunstan was informed of his death whilst on the way to visit him, by an angel, who spoke in so loud a tone that the horse the saint was riding fell dead.

Such ridiculous legends passed for truth in those semi-barbarous and unenlightened times.

Edred left two sons, who did not, however, succeed him; the crown descending to his nephew Edwy, the son of his elder brother Edmund.

CHAPTER XII.

Reign of Edwy—His Quarrel with Dunstan—Exile of the latter—Edgar in Mercia—Death of Edwy—Slanders of the Monkish Writers.

EDWY, surnamed Pancalus, or the Fair, was only fourteen years of age when he mounted the throne; but although so young, he gave proofs of an understanding and independence of mind, very different from the slavish, superstitious subjection of his predecessor. One of the first acts of his administration, was to call Dunstan to account for the vast sums of money which the late king had entrusted to him.

The haughty churchman, instead of rendering an account, answered that it had been placed in his hands for religious purposes, and that he was not answerable to any earthly tribunal. At the same time he condescended to add that Edred's liberality in rebuilding Glastonbury would explain the expenditure of the greater part of it. And with this reply, both the king and his council were compelled to appear content, and let the matter drop, for fear the people, incited by the monks, should take offence, and espouse the cause of the abbot.

Edwy and his advisers, foiled in their first attack, took another course, in which the canons of the church, as well as the laws of the kingdom, were so clearly on their side, that it was impossible to gainsay their proceedings.

They expelled all the monks from the benefices, and restored the secular priests to their livings.

Dunstan was so incensed at these proceedings, that he went into exile; some assert voluntarily, others that he was banished.

Edwy and his advisers soon discovered that their triumph was but a momentary one, and that of all enemies sacerdotal ones are the most dangerous to contend with. From the monastery in Flanders to which he had retired, Dunstan so incited the monks that they opposed in every way the administration of the young king, persuading the credulous people that he was the most impious of men.

The consequence of these slanders was not long in showing itself. Edgar raised the inhabitants of Mercia against the king, his brother, and joining with the Danes in East Anglia and in Northumbria, soon reduced the unfortunate Edwy to the greatest extremity; so much so that he resigned all but the kingdom of Wessex, which still remained faithful to him.

Edgar was elected king of Mercia. It is related that whilst the nobles were deliberating on their choice, a voice from heaven was heard commanding them to choose Edgar as their sovereign.

Most probably the monkish writers who have recorded this pretended miracle, could also have explained, had they thought fit, the means by which it was wrought.

Edwy did not long survive the change; falling into a deep melancholy, he died, after a reign of four years.

According to the history of this truly unfortunate prince, as monkish writers have written it, he must have been more than usually depraved; but their evidence ought to be received with considerable doubt, if not positive incredulity. They have recorded of him that on his death his soul was being carried away by a legion of devils to the place of eternal torment, when St. Dunstan, who saw what was going on—how, the priestly historians do not condescend to inform us—took compassion on him, and prayed so fervently that God himself, moved by his entreaties, snatched the unfortunate soul from the hands of the fiends, and placed it in Paradise.

For ages such legends were looked upon as history.

The cause of the young king's enmity to Dunstan is more easily explained. He had espoused Elgiva—the monks assert she was his mistress; but, had she been so, neither the abbot nor archbishop could have interfered.

On the day of his coronation the young king had retired with his beautiful wife to avoid the excesses of the feast. St. Dunstan rushed rudely into the apartment and dragged him from her: if he proclaimed her a harlot, it was under pretence that they were related within the prohibited degree. The unhappy lady was branded on the forehead, and banished to Ireland; from which place of exile, having got cured of her wounds, she returned; was seized upon a second time by her priestly persecutors, and hamstrung, of which outrage she died at Gloucester.

CHAPTER XIII.

Reign of Edgar—The Kingdoms of Wessex and Mercia united—Recall of Dunstan, who is elevated first to the See of Worcester, then to that of Canterbury—His Influence and Character.

EDWY dying without issue, his brother Edgar succeeded him, and thus united the two kingdoms. One of his first acts was to recall Dunstan from his exile in Flanders, and

make him bishop of Worcester, an act which gives reason to suspect the wily churchman was no stranger to the rebellion which placed the new monarch on the throne of Mercia.

The reign of Edgar was so remarkable for its tranquillity that it obtained for him the name of the "Peaceable," a state of things easily understood, when it is remembered that he kept up not only a considerable army, but a powerful fleet which made the Danes cautious how they invaded the island.

This wise policy so extended his influence, that without fighting a single battle, he obliged the kings of Wales and the Isle of Man to do homage to him.

It is recorded that whilst keeping his court at Chester, he was rowed down the river Dee by eight of these tributary sovereigns.

Edgar, in order to free the country from the wolves who infested it, commuted the tribute of the Welsh into three hundred wolves' heads, and granted a pardon to many criminals on condition that each one within a given time brought in a certain number.

The consequence was that these destructive animals very soon disappeared from the kingdom.

Edgar's good qualities, and the tranquillity England enjoyed during his reign, leave no doubt that he was a wise and excellent king. But his bigotry, which at the time was extolled as the most sublime virtue, is the principal cause of the commendations given him by historians, and of his being honoured with the title of saint after his death. He is said to have founded forty monasteries, and repaired and beautified many more, particularly that of Glastonbury, the rebuilding of which was begun by his uncle,

Edwy dragged by Dunstan from the presence of Elgiva.

Edred. He was extravagantly liberal to the monks; and Ingulphus, in his history of the abbey of Croyland, says, that in his reign, the treasure of that monastery amounted to ten thousand pounds, besides holy vessels, shrines, relics, &c. This was an immense sum, considering that house had been rebuilt but thirty years; and from its wealth, some idea may be gathered of the immense riches of the monasteries in those times.

Edgar, not content with being thus profuse to the regular clergy, undertook to put them in possession again of the ecclesiastical benefices; no doubt at the instigation of Dunstan, whom he had made archbishop of Canterbury. This prelate was so much in his favour, that Edred's affection to him was trifling in comparison of Edgar's. As he holds a very prominent place in the history of this and the following reign, it will not be irrelevant to give the following particulars of him.

Edgar the Pacific being rowed down the River Dee by Eight Tributary Princes.

Dunstan was the son of Herstan, and nephew of Athelm, archbishop of Canterbury, and was born at Glastonbury in 925. He spent his youth with his uncle, the archbishop, who took care to have him instructed in all the sciences as far as that age of ignorance would permit. He is said to have excelled particularly in music and painting, in which he took great delight all his life. By painting, we must understand that kind which was used in illuminating missals. As soon as he had finished his studies, the archbishop recommended him to King Athelstan, who sent for him to court, but gave him no preferment. The author of his life pretends the courtiers, envying his virtue and learning, slandered him to the king, by saying, that he was a dissolute person, which, the king believing, banished him without a hearing. Some time afterwards the archbishop, his uncle, found means to undeceive Athelstan, and he was restored to favour, and presented with some lands near Glastonbury; where he spent several years in retirement with certain devout men, whom he had drawn together living with them a monastic life. Glaston, or Glassenbury, was anciently a small church, founded, according to the vulgar opinion, by Joseph of Arimathea. This church having been destroyed, Devy, bishop of St. David's, built another in the same place; which being also gone to ruin, was repaired by twelve devout persons, who, coming from Armorica, settled in this place. Ina, king of Wessex, having pulled it down to the ground, raised a stately church, and dedicated it to Christ, St. Peter, and St. Paul; and several persons famous for their piety, most of them Irish, retired thither, where they were maintained by Edgar's bounty. From that time there were always devout persons, who made choice of the place for their retreat.

After Dunstan had been some time at Glastonbury, Edmund, successor of Athelstan, having conceived an esteem for him, built there a monastery, and made him

abbot; and as Dunstan was a person of great address and ability, he maintained a great authority over this prince, and was very much in favour all his reign; and his interest at court even increased under Edred, to whom he was prime minister and confessor. Dunstan's extreme fondness for a monastic life made him use, without any caution, all his interest to induct the monks to the benefices, and eject the secular priests, whom he both despised and hated. His attachment to the former class, added to his arrogance, procured him abundance of enemies, and drew upon him the displeasure of Edwy's successor, Edmund, as we have already seen. Upon his return to England, he was promoted, as already stated, to the see of Worcester; and some time after, the bishopric of London being vacant, he was entrusted with the management of it; which has led some writers into the mistake of imagining he was bishop of Worcester and London at the same time.

Edgar never ceased to give him fresh marks of his esteem, and his regard for him was strengthened by the miracles attributed to him. After the death of Athelm, who held the see of Canterbury, Odo, by birth a Dane, was made archbishop, but did not long survive his installation; and to him succeeded Elfin, who died as he was going to Rome for his pall, in the beginning of Edgar's reign. Brithelm, bishop of Bath, was elected to the vacant see; but Edgar, being desirous of making Dunstan archbishop, called a general council, where he represented Brithelm as unqualified for so great a station; whereupon he was ordered to return to his old diocese, and Dunstan was chosen in his place. This election not being perfectly canonical, it was deemed necessary that Dunstan should go to Rome, on pretence of receiving his pall, and at the same time justify these proceedings. The pope, who was perfectly aware how extensive the influence of Dunstan was at the court of England, and who was gratified by the zeal with which he had espoused the interest of the church of Rome and of the monks, readily confirmed his election, constituting him at the same time his legate in England, with most extensive powers.

In justification of this remarkable man's favourite project of removing the secular clergy from their benefices and supplying their places by the monks, it must be admitted that the former had become fearfully corrupt, as a body; that luxury, gluttony, avarice, and lust reigned amongst them. Perhaps he sincerely thought to benefit the church by a change which was clearly against the laws of the kingdom.

Dunstan caused a council of the church to be held, at which Edgar assisted in person, and made the following remarkable oration, which is both curious and interesting as a picture of the corruptions of the clergy of the time, and his subserviency to the views of Dunstan:—

"Almighty God having vouchsafed of his infinite mercy to show his goodness to us in a remarkable manner, it is most reasonable, reverend fathers, we should exert our endeavours to make a suitable return. That we are in possession of this plentiful country is not owing to any strength of our own, but to the help of his all-powerful arm, who has been pleased to manifest his loving-kindness towards us. It is but just, therefore, we should bring ourselves, our souls, and bodies, in subjection to him who has subdued all things for us, and should take care that all that are under us should be obedient to his laws. It is my office, reverend fathers, to administer justice without respect of persons; to suppress the rebellious; to punish the sacrilegious; to protect the poor and weak from the hand of the oppressor. It is my business also to take care that the church and her ministers, the holy fraternities of the religious orders, have all things necessary to their subsistence and well-being. But it is your duty to examine into the life and conversation of the clergy. To you it belongs to see that they live agreeably to their profession: that they are sober, temperate, chaste, hospitable to the poor and the stranger: that they are careful in the administration of their office, constant in their instructions to the people: in a word, that they are worthy of the glorious character of the ministers of Jesus Christ. With submission be it spoken, reverend fathers, had you taken due care of these things, I should not have had the dissatisfaction of hearing from all hands the enormous crimes daily committed by the clergy of this land. I insist not on the smallness of their tonsure, contrary to the canons of the church, nor their effeminacy in their habits, nor the arrogance in their gestures, nor on their immodest discourses, which plainly show all is not right within. I omit their negligence with regard to divine service: hardly will they vouchsafe their company at the public prayers, and when they come to church to celebrate the holy mysteries, one would think it was a mockery. But the chief subject of my complaint, I speak it with extreme regret, is what ministers occasion of grief to the good, and of joy to the profane—I mean the lewd and scandalous lives they lead. They spend their days in diversions, entertainments, drunkenness, and debauchery. Their houses may be said to be so many sinks of lewdness, public stages, and receptacles of libertines. There they have gaming, dancing, and obscene singing. There they pass the night in rioting and drunkenness. It is thus, reverend fathers, it is thus the bounty of my predecessors to the church, and their charities for the maintenance of the poor, and what is more, the adorable blood of our Saviour, are consumed. Was it for this that our ancestors exhausted their treasures? Was it for this they were so liberal of their estates? Was it to deck the concubines of their priests, to provide for them splendid entertainments, to furnish them with dogs and hawks, that our forefathers displayed their munificence to the church? these are the crimes which the people complain of in private, and the soldiers in public; which are sung in the streets, and acted undisguisedly; and yet they are forgiven, they are overlooked, they are connived at by you! Where is now the sword of Levi, and the zeal of Simeon? Where is the wrath of Moses against the worshippers of the golden calf? Where is the indignation of St. Peter against Simon the magician? Imitate, reverend fathers, imitate the zeal of these holy persons, and follow the way of righteousness, shown you by the Lord. It is high time for you to draw the sword of St. Peter, whilst I make use of the great Constantine's. Let us join our forces to expel the lepers out of the temple, to cleanse the sanctuary, and to cause the Lord to be served by the true sons of Levi, who said to his father and to his mother, 'I know you not;' and to his brethren, 'I know not who you are.' Let the disrespect to the relics of the saints, and the daily profaning of holy altars rouse you up. Be moved at the great abuse of the piety of our forefathers. One of my ancestors, you all know, dedicated to the church the tithe of the kingdom. The glorious Alfred, my great grandfather, laid

out his revenues in religious uses. You are not ignorant of the great benefactions of my father and uncle, which it would be highly dishonourable so soon to forget; seeing that the altars are still adorned with them. You, O Dunstan, father of fathers, raise your imagination a little, I pray you, and fancy you behold my father looking down from heaven, and expostulating with you in this manner: 'It was you that advised me to the building of so many churches and monasteries; it was you I made choice of for my spiritual guide, and the inspector of my behaviour. Did I not always obey your voice? Did I not always prefer your advice before wealth? How frankly did I lay out my treasures when you commanded! My charities were always ready when you called for them. Whatever was desired for the churches was immediately granted. If you complained that the monks were straitened in their circumstances, their wants were forthwith supplied. You used to tell me that such liberalities brought forth immortal fruit, and were highly meritorious; since they were expended in supporting the servants of God, and maintaining the poor. And is it not an intolerable shame they should be laid out in adorning and decking a pack of prostitutes? Are these the fruits of my benefactions? Are these the effects of your glorious promises?' These, O Dunstan, are the complaints of the king, my father. What can you answer to this charge? I am convinced that you have hitherto been unblamable. When you saw a thief, you consented not to him; neither have you been partaker with the adulterer. No, you have endeavoured to correct these abuses; you have exhorted, argued, and threatened. But since these means have proved in vain, it is time to apply more effectual remedies. You have here ready to assist you the reverend father Ethelwald, bishop of Winchester, and the reverend Oswald, bishop of Worcester. To you three, I refer the management of this important affair. Exert the episcopal in conjunction with the regal authority to expel from the church of God the disorderly clergy, and put in such as live regularly in their stead."

This harangue, which was, most probably, written by Dunstan himself, had the desired effect. The three bishops expelled the secular priests, and gave their benefices to the monks, the objects of the king's and archbishop's favour.

Though it is but too true the priests at that time led very disorderly lives, yet that was not the thing that drew this storm upon them; their marriage was the great cause of offence; it was that which their enemies were desirous should be thought a more heinous crime than fornication, or any other actual sin which they could lay to their charge. Their wives were always called concubines, or by a more opprobrious name; and notwithstanding all the endeavours of the court of Rome, this real or pretended abuse could not be reformed till the end of the twelfth century, when the celibacy of the clergy was established after a struggle of three hundred years.

The monks were bound in gratitude to make a suitable return for the service Edgar had done them; and, accordingly, their historians have endeavoured, by their excessive commendations, to make him pass for a real saint. But whether for want of attention, or some other reason, they have related some particulars of his life, which certainly do not tend to sustain that idea of him. If, indeed, his political actions are only considered, it must be confessed he was a great prince; but a great king and a great saint are two very different characters. For instance, it would be very difficult to justify, by the Gospel, a massacre perpetrated by his order in the Isle of Thanet, upon a very slight occasion, as historians allow; and what might not these said historians have said of his vicious inclination to women, who published to the world that the soul of his brother Edwy was about to be dragged into hell for having had a single mistress?

It is in fact very palpable that if Edgar had not purchased the good opinion of the monks by his excessive complaisance, they would have given him no better a character than his predecessor, who was much less faulty in his morals. To conclude the reign of Edgar, which was disturbed neither by foreign nor domestic wars, it remains only to give an account of his amours, which will prove that his good qualities were not without a great mixture of failings.

His first mistress was a nun, whom he took by force out of a convent, and could not be prevailed on to send back, even by the solicitations of Dunstan. He had a daughter by her named Editha, who was greatly celebrated for her sanctity. It is true, he atoned for his crime by not wearing his crown during the space of seven years. A severe penance, indeed, for a fault his confessor, under other circumstances, would have denounced as a sacrilege! By his second mistress, whom some however call his lawful wife, Elfleda, surnamed the Fair, from her complexion, he had a son called Edward, who succeeded him.

Edgar died in 976, in the thirty-second year of his age. He was afterwards canonised, and miracles are said to have been worked at his shrine.

CHAPTER XIV.

Edward the Martyr—His Election to the Throne through the influence of Dunstan—Doubts as to his Legitimacy—his Reign and Death.

Edgar left two sons and a daughter. The eldest son, Edward, was by many deemed illegitimate; and a numerous party of the nobility were for raising his brother, the son of the queen Elfrida, to the throne; and in all probability would have succeeded but for the promptitude and courage of Dunstan, who, in the assembly held on the death of the late king, took Edward by the hand, led him towards the church, attended by the other bishops and a great crowd of people, and anointed the young prince king, without regarding the opposition of the party against him. The nobles deplored their falling once more under the government of that imperious prelate; but as they saw the people ready to support him, they were compelled to submit.

Edward was but fourteen years old when he began to reign under the guardianship of Dunstan, who immediately took all the power into his hands; and, as soon as he was fixed in the regency, exerted every possible means to maintain the monks in possession of the benefices they had acquired in the last reign, and made use of the king's authority to that end. But he met with greater opposition than he contemplated, for as the king was but a minor, the orders given in his name were not so readily complied with. Dunstan assembled several councils about this affair; but most probably all his endeavours would have proved ineffectual, if by means of several miracles, which were never wanting when requisite, he had not brought the people to believe that Heaven interposed in the affair.

In one of these councils held at Winchester, the majority being against the monks, they would have infallibly lost their cause, if, on a sudden, a crucifix that hung aloft in the room had not pronounced these words with an audible voice: "It shall not be done, it shall not be done. You have decided the matter well hitherto, and would be to blame to change." Astonished at this oracle, the most obstinate immediately voted for the monks.

At another assembly in the same place, Dunstan had used all his endeavours to have one Elphegus, a monk, chosen dean of that church; but the people were desirous that the dignity should be conferred on a secular priest; and the contest ran so high, that there was likely to have been a struggle, which might have been of dangerous consequence. But St. Andrew, the apostle, on a sudden revealing to St. Dunstan in the presence of all the people, that the monk ought to be elected, he was immediately installed.

The dispute between the regular and secular clergy gave rise to great contentions in the kingdom, many of the nobility bitterly resenting the induction of the monks into the benefices. At last a council was called, at which Archbishop Dunstan presided. The assembly had not long been met before the floor of the apartment gave way—the only portion which remained intact being the beams which supported the chair of the primate, whose preservation was regarded as a miracle by the common people and the party who acted with him.

After such a manifestation of the divine will, for such it was considered, all further opposition ceased; the principal opponents of the measure perished.

A shrewd suspicion has been entertained that Dunstan knew beforehand what was about to occur, even if he had not secretly prepared the catastrophe, seeing that he had warned the king not to attend the meeting. The most remarkable circumstance attending Edward was his death, which took place in 979, after a reign of four years.

Edward, who had been hunting in the neighbourhood of Corfe-Castle, the residence of his mother-in-law, Elfrida, resolved to pay her a visit. The queen hastened to receive him and pressed him earnestly to alight; this the prince, who most probably had good reasons to suspect her feelings towards him, declined: observing that he had merely time to accept a draught of wine. In the act of drinking it, he was stabbed in the back by an assassin whom Elfrida had bribed to commit the crime which was to elevate her son Ethelred to the throne.

Finding himself wounded, the youthful monarch set spurs to his horse and fled; but, fainting from loss of blood, fell and perished miserably.

The parties sent after him by the murderess easily traced the route he had taken by the track of blood. The body was brought back to Corfe-Castle and thrown into a well, where it was afterwards found, and removed first to Wareham and afterwards to Shaftesbury, where it was interred in a church founded by King Alfred.

Shortly after his death the monks spread the report that miracles were worked at his tomb; the blind were said to have received their sight, the lame to recover the use of their limbs. Elfrida, to atone for her crime, founded two convents, in one of which, at Andover, she retired and passed the rest of her days in penitence.

Edward was canonised by the Roman church, and is generally known as St. Edward the Martyr.

Drawing of the Crucifixion. From Harleian MSS., 602.

CHAPTER XV.

History of the Church from the Time of Egbert to the Death of Edward the Martyr.

Although many very learned writers have disputed the authenticity of the charter by which Ethelwulph granted the tithes of England to the clergy, we deem it necessary to give the document, as being important, from the rights, real or imaginary, founded upon it. If genuine, in all probability, it merely conferred rights which the Anglican church had long claimed.

"I, Ethelwulph, by the grace of God king of the West Saxons, by the advice of the bishops, earls, and other persons of distinction in my dominions, have, for the health of my soul, the good of my people, and the prosperity of my kingdom, taken the prudent and serviceable resolution of granting the tenth part of my lands throughout my whole kingdom, to the church and ministers of religion, to be enjoyed by them with all the privileges of free tenure, and discharged from all services due to the crown, and all incumbrances incidental to lay fees.

"This gift has been made by us to the church in honour of Jesus Christ, the blessed Virgin, and all saints, and out of regard to the Paschal solemnity, and that Almighty God might vouchsafe His blessing to us and our posterity.

"Dated at the Palace of Wilton, in the year 854, indication the second, at the feast of Easter."

By this charter, real or spurious, a tenth *part* of the lands only are given to the church. It was left for the priests, in succeeding reigns, to convert the tenth part into a tenth of the *produce*, which certainly does not appear upon the face of the document to have been the intention either of the king or the members of the council.

In speaking of the reigns of Ethelbald, Ethelbert, and Ethelred the First, the monkish historians have left us but little real information respecting the affairs of the church, their pages being filled with lamentations over the massacre and plunderings of the monasteries and convents by the Danes, who appear to have exercised the greatest barbarities.

To the time of Dunstan the English clergy were not bound to celibacy, which they looked upon as an innovation on their rights; hence that fiery champion's ardent zeal for the monks, who followed the rule. His influence with Edgar induced that monarch to remove the secular priests from their benefices for refusing to separate from their wives. Rome, in its astute policy, had commanded that the priesthood should remain unmarried, and found in Dunstan a willing instrument of its designs.

The councils held on ecclesiastical affairs were composed of laymen as well as priests; properly speaking, they were scarcely to be called councils, being spoken of in the Saxon chronicles by the name of Wittena-Gemot, or Micel Synod, both signifying the great council.

It was at an assembly of this kind, at Winchester, that Ethelwulph is said to have granted the famous charter which secured to the clergy the tithes; but the most important regulations for the church were made at the Synod of Greatly, where the following laws or canons were enacted.

The first for the payment of tithes.

Second, authorising the judges to execute the laws against those who had been proved guilty of offences by the trial by ordeal.

Third, against witches and highwaymen.

The fourth names the cities and towns where money was to be coined; thus, Canterbury was to have seven mints, four for the king, two for the archbishop, and one for the abbot of St. Augustines; Rochester three, two for the king, and one for the bishop; London eight: Winchester six; Lewes, Southampton, Exeter, Shaftesbury, and Wareham two each; and other cities and great towns one.

The punishment for any workman employed in these places being found guilty of debasing the coin was, that he should have his right hand cut off, and the forfeited member be nailed to the wall of the mint.

The fifth regulates the circumstances and formalities of the ordeal trial, to know whether the person accused were guilty or not. And here we have two things worth remarking. The first is, that the priests are spoken of as fixed or settled in certain places; whence it is plain, that in those days they did not live together in common, but each had his particular church. The second is, that the accused person was to receive the consecrated bread; whence it may be inferred, that since the eucharist was called bread after the consecration, the church of England was far from believing transubstantiation.

The sixth forbids buying and selling on Sunday.

The seventh is against perjuries and false witnesses. Those guilty of this offence were never to be believed in justice again, and at their deaths deprived of Christian burial.

Another commands the bishops to sit on the bench with the judges, and assist them to execute the laws, which were at the same time enacted with great severity against thieves, stating, that if a thief be taken in the fact no man shall spare him, if he be above twenty years old, and had stolen anything above the value of eightpence. If any one do contrary thereto, he shall pay the value of the thief's head, and make amends for the fault, and yet the thief himself shall not be spared; who, if he contumaciously make resistance, or fly for it, shall find no favour. A thief cast into prison shall there stay forty days, and then, after the payment of one hundred and twenty shillings, be discharged; but his kindred must give security for his good behaviour; after which, if he steal again, they must either pay the value of his head, or bring him back to prison; and in case one resist, he shall pay to the king, or to any other whom it concerns, the value of his own head; and if any defend him, he shall pay to the king one hundred and twenty shillings.

The ninth lays a fine upon remiss and negligent magistrates, which was to be paid to the bishop of the diocese.

We find another synod, or mixed assembly, in the reign of Edmund, wherein the ceremonies of marriage, and preliminary securities the parties were to give one another, are settled.

To the ecclesiastical laws passed at these general assemblies or councils, may be aptly subjoined certain constitutions made in those days. The ten following are Odo's, archbishop of Canterbury.

The first threatens all those who injure the church in her property with excommunication.

The second exhorts princes (and other great men) to be governed by the directions of the bishops, because God has entrusted them with the keys of the kingdom of heaven.

The third admonishes bishops to discharge their duty, doing so without any mercenary views, or respect of persons.

The fourth and fifth give good advice to the clergy.

The sixth does the same with regard to the monks.

The seventh prohibits unlawful marriages upon the score of nearness of relation; but the degrees of consanguinity and affinity are not recited.

The eighth recommends unity and charity among Christians.

The ninth urges fasting on Wednesdays, Fridays, and the four ember weeks.

The tenth enjoins the punctual payment of tithes, from reasons taken out of the Old Testament, without any mention of Ethelwulph's charter.

There are other constitutions, published under king Edgar; the last, however, is imperfect.

The first confirms the civil rights and immunities of the church, and commands the payment of tithes, those in cattle before Whitsuntide, of the fruits of the earth before the equinox, and of seeds at the feast of St. Martin.

And the fifth, by which the solemnity of Sunday is to

begin at three o'clock on Saturday in the afternoon, and to continue until break of day on Monday. Edgar made several other constitutions for the regulation of religious houses. In those in the book belonging to Winchester cathedral, Edgar makes himself general of the monks.

In this reign were published a body of canons, of which the following are particularly remarkable.

The seventeenth orders parents to teach their children the Lord's prayer and the Apostles' creed, without which they were neither to be admitted to the eucharist, nor buried in consecrated ground.

The twenty-ninth forbids the burying in churches all those that were not of known and approved probity.

The thirty-second prohibits the priests from officiating

Assassination of Edward the Martyr. (See p. 46.)

By the fifth, if a priest received any injury, the complaint was to be preferred to the synod, who were to treat the case as if the injury had actually been done to the whole body of the clergy, and take care that satisfaction be made at the discretion of the bishop of the diocese.

The eleventh enjoins the priests to learn some employment, in order to get their livelihood in case of misfortune.

without the service-book before them, for fear the trusting to their memories might make them mistake.

By the thirty-sixth, no person was to eat or drink before the receiving the communion.

The thirty-eighth enjoins the priest to have the holy eucharist always ready by him; but in case it grew so stale that it could not be eaten without disgusting the palate, it

was to be burnt in a clear fire, and the ashes laid under the altar.

The forty-third forbids the eating of blood.

The fifty-second orders priests to preach every Sunday.

The sixty-fourth declares hunting and hawking are improper diversions for a priest, who is to make books his entertainment.

These canons were translated by Sir H. Spelman, from a Saxon manuscript in Bennet College, Cambridge. It is not known where or by what authority they were drawn up.

After these canons, there follows a very particular form of confession, with what penances the confessor is to enjoin. We find here that the penitent was ordered to say the Lord's prayer threescore times a-day.

The following are the names of some of the most learned churchmen and saints who flourished from the time of Ethelwulph to the death of Edmund the Martyr.

The first saint is Swithin, or Swithun, who, having been preceptor to king Ethelwulph, was promoted to the see of Winchester; and it is said, that it was by his advice that

The Sister of King Sweyn murdered in the General Massacre of the Danes by the Saxons, on the Eve of St. Brice, 1002. (See p. 52.)

Ethelwulph granted the charter of the tithes to the church. This alone was sufficient to procure him the honour of canonisation, independent of his other merits.

Of Alfred the Great we have already spoken.

Johannes Scotus, surnamed Erigena, or Irishman (Ireland being then called Erin), also flourished at this time. He had already acquired an extensive reputation in France, where Charles the Bald entertained him at his court, and used to converse with him with great familiarity, when Alfred invited him into England. He was at first the king's preceptor in languages and the sciences; but he afterwards taught at Oxford, whence, in all probability, he was removed to Malmsbury, since it was in this monastery he is said to have been stabbed to death by his scholars with penknives. Before he left France, he was engaged by the emperor's order in the dispute concerning the nature of the eucharist; and in his treatise upon this subject, he strongly argued against Pascasius's doctrine, who maintained the body of Christ in the eucharist to be the same that was born of the Blessed Virgin. It must therefore necessarily be, that the contrary opinion defended by Scotus was not looked upon then as heretical, since it prevented not Alfred from inviting him into England, from having a very great esteem for him, and entrusting him with the education of youth; and, indeed, it is certain he was honoured as a saint and a martyr after his death. Roger de Hoveden says, Scotus at first had an obscure burial; but afterwards, a miraculous light shining over his grave for several nights together, the monks of St. Lawrence removed his body into their church, and buried it close by the altar.

His epitaph also, the antiquity of which, according to Malmsbury, appears from the structure and diction of the verses, indisputably says he was considered a saint when that was erected.

Grimbald, who lived also in the same century, was very eminent for his learning, and had a great reputation. He was invited into England by Alfred the Great (who was acquainted with him at Rheims), and who advanced him to the government of the new abbey at Winchester.

Among the Englishmen, eminent for their learning, Asserius was one of the most considerable. He wrote the life of Alfred the Great in 893, and died bishop of St. David's, in Wales. His work extended only to the 45th year of the king's age; that is, to the year 893. It was continued to Alfred's death by some later hand. He shows through the whole a great deal of modesty; and mentions nothing of the visionary dialogue betwixt Alfred and St. Cuthbert, which other historians largely insist on. He is copied by Florence of Worcester, and others. This treatise was first published by Archbishop Parker in the old Saxon character; and there is an edition by Mr. Wise, fellow of Trinity College, Oxford, with a vindication of the contested clause about the antiquity of Oxford. Leland calls it the chronicle of St. Neots, because he found it in that monastery.

Werefrid, bishop of Worcester, in Mercia, lived in the reign of King Buthred. When the Danes became masters of Mercia, he retired into France, from whence he was recalled by King Alfred. He translated the dialogues of Gregory the Great into Saxon; and having acquired a great reputation for learning and piety when living, he was registered as a saint after his death.

Plegmund, who was archbishop of Canterbury, was considered a very learned prelate, and was particularly eminent for his skill in divinity.

Dunulf had been a herdsman; and is affirmed by some to be the same who sheltered Alfred whilst the Danes possessed the kingdom. However this may be, he had the good fortune to be known to this prince; who finding him a person of a genius superior to his birth and employment, had him instructed in learning, and used his advice in affairs of the greatest moment. He subsequently promoted him to the see of Winchester, which was then the metropolis of Wessex, and the place where Alfred usually resided.

Wulfig, bishop of London, had also a great share in Alfred's esteem, as appears by his letter to this prelate prefixed to his translation of Gregory's pastoral.

Neots was an abbot distinguished for his birth, learning, regularity, and zeal for promoting the interests of the true religion. Some say, he was nearly related to King Alfred, and others, that he was descended from the blood-royal of East Anglia. He died in 890, in Cornwall, where he left his name to the town of Neotstow, or St. Neots.

Odo, archbishop of Canterbury, was the son of an East Anglian Dane, a Pagan, who expelled him from his home for becoming a Christian; in the reign of Edward the Elder he became a priest. Odo refused, and with some appearance of sincerity, the primacy which Edmund entreated him to accept.

He proved a zealous champion of the monks, and an unflinching advocate for the celibacy of the clergy.

Of St. Dunstan, it may truly be said that he was the directing spirit of the church, in England, in the age in which he lived. Devoted to Rome, and to its interests, he contrived to establish the new order of things respecting the marriage of priests, which the popes had so much at heart.

Turkelict, or Turkelut, the near relative and chancellor of Edmund, retired to a monastery, and lived in great sanctity.

CHAPTER XVI.

Ethelred the Second—His Reign—Wars with the Danes—Reverses and Death.

After the murder of Edward, Ethelred, whose youth absolved him from all suspicion of having shared in his mother's crime, succeeded to the vacant throne, to the great discontent of Dunstan, who, despite his influence with the people, did not dare to refuse to crown him.

The young prince is said to have bitterly lamented his brother's death, and wept for him so long, that the imperious Elfrida chastised him severely for his weakness.

Scarcely had the new monarch received the crown, than the Danes determined to renew their invasion of England: a powerful body of them landed at Southampton, which they pillaged, and then directed their expedition into Cornwall.

The same year a second band landed at Portland, and ravaged the surrounding country.

These invasions, which, during the first ten years of Ethelred's reign, were exceedingly frequent, though only of a temporary character, were exceedingly harassing, seeing that the Saxons had not only an enormous extent of coast to guard, but never knew the exact point at which their enemies would land.

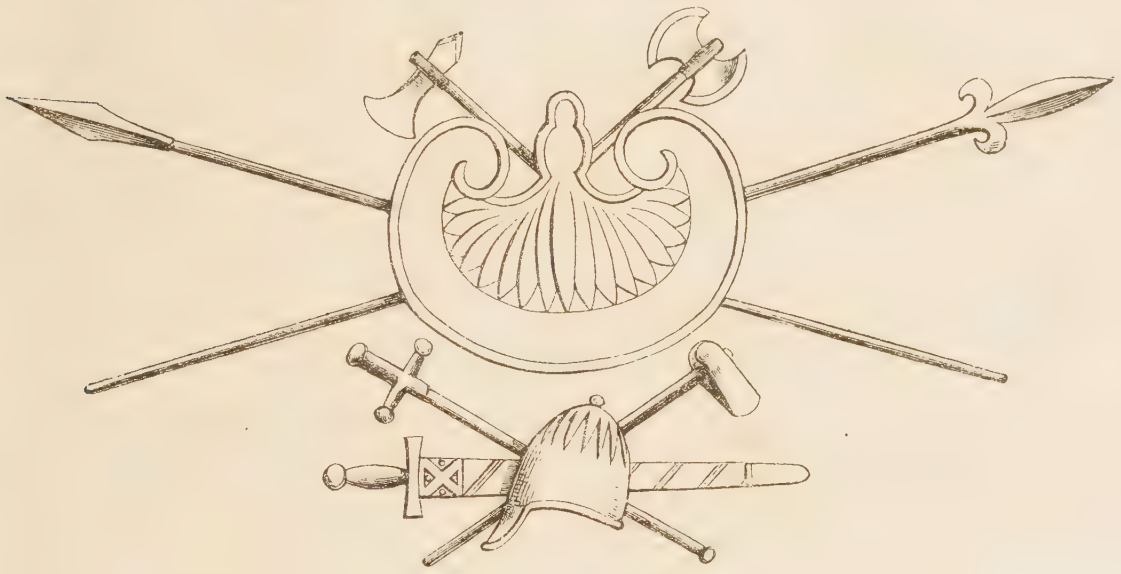
Frequently, when their army was in one part of the kingdom, the invaders would debark at another, and before it could march to the place threatened, the barbarians would collect their booty and retire to their ships. The only efficient remedy for these misfortunes would have been to equip a powerful fleet, so as to have encountered the Danes at sea, but the youth and inexperience of the king prevented such a step, and the island was exposed, in consequence, to outrage, murder, and pillage.

Elfric, duke of Mercia, whose activity and military skill rendered him one of the most zealous as well as successful defenders of England, died in 983; and his loss added still more to the insolence of the Danes, and miseries of the people.

As the character of Ethelred developed itself, he proved a very different personage from his predecessors in his treatment of the monks, whose influence had considerably decreased amongst the lower orders. The people naturally excited by the success of their subjects, and the immense amount of plunder they brought home from England, determined on joining their forces, and attacking the island. With this intent, they fitted out a powerful fleet and sailed up the Thames, with the intention of making themselves masters of London. The courageous resistance of the inhabitants, however, obliged them to retire without obtaining possession of the city.

Determined not to be disappointed in the great object of their expedition, which was plunder, the two Danish kings directed their troops into the interior of the island, levying contributions in Kent, Sussex, and Hampshire. The sufferings of the inhabitants became intolerable.

Ethelred once more had recourse to money, and promised the enemy a large sum, on condition that they ceased their cruelties and quitted the kingdom; the offer was accepted. The weak, cowardly monarch afterwards received the king of Norway as a friend and ally; and persuaded him to



Danish Arms and Armour.

began to ask, why men, who had performed so many miracles when their own interests were in danger, could not work one to preserve the kingdom from the attacks of the common enemy; and the king very shortly afterwards, in a dispute between himself and the bishop of Rochester, laid waste the lands belonging to his diocese, particularly those of the monastery of St. Andrew.

It was in vain that the prelate predicted the vengeance of the apostle, and obtained the interference of Dunstan, who had long since been removed from all direction in affairs; the remonstrances of the primate were treated, like those of his suffragan, with contempt; and the ambitious churchman died shortly afterwards of the bitter mortification he had received, in 988.

In 991, Justin and Guthmund, two Danish leaders, landed at Ipswich; and, having defeated the Duke of East Anglia, Brithnoth, who attempted to oppose their progress, Ethelred was compelled to give them a large sum of money to retire from the country.

Sweyn, king of Denmark, and Olaus, king of Norway, receive baptism. Olaus quitted the country after taking an oath, which he kept, of never returning again.

His colleague, Sweyn, had formed far different projects. When he returned home, he left his fleet at Southampton to keep the English in awe; and also to receive the payment of the money promised. No sooner had he taken his departure than his admiral became impatient for the tribute.

But as there was no haste made to comply with these demands, he took their delay for a refusal, and resolved to renew the war. In order to elude the vigilance of the English, he set sail, as if to return to Denmark, but on a sudden, he unexpectedly entered the Severn, and after devastating Wales with fire and sword, crossed the river and penetrated into Dorsetshire where he committed the same ravages. All the forces that could be levied against the Danes were defeated as soon as raised. They sacked whole counties, it being impossible to oppose them; till at last, finding nothing more to plunder in that part, they put to sea again, and landed in Kent. The inhabitants, by

endeavouring to make some resistance, only increased the fury of their enemies, who treated them with the utmost barbarity; and, to complete their misfortunes, a fleet, equipped by Ethelred to engage them at sea, was rendered useless by the dissensions and unskilfulness of the commanders. In this melancholy situation, England would have irretrievably perished, if the Danes by a lucky and unexpected accident had not been called to the assistance of Richard II., duke of Normandy, whom the king of France would have dispossessed of his dominions. Ethelred took this opportunity to go and ravage Cumberland, but for what reason is unknown. After that, he returned to London, where he kept his usual residence.

The quiet which England now enjoyed, was but the lull of the tempest. Having succeeded in their errand in France, the Danes quickly returned, landed at Cornwall, and entered Wessex, which suffered terribly from their presence. They afterwards made themselves masters of Exeter.

In this extremity, Ethelred, who had no resolution, agreed at last to pay the Danes thirty thousand pounds; and this sum, which in those days was very considerable, was levied by a tax called Danegeld, that is, Danish money, or money for the Danes; and for the payment of it, every hide of land was taxed at twelve pence.

A hide of land is such a quantity of land as may be ploughed with one plough in a year. Bede reckons it as much as will maintain a family. Some say it was a hundred acres; others, that it contained no certain number of acres. The division of England by hides of land is very ancient, mention being made of it in the laws of Ina. Danegeld was the first land-tax in England. It was afterwards called Hidagium, which name remained afterwards upon all taxes and subsidies imposed on lands. By the Normans they were afterwards called taxes, and sometimes tallages, and auxilia and subsidia. The Saxon kings before this had their levies of money and personal services, towards the building and repairing of cities, castles, bridges, military expeditions, which, from the word bote, that is, repair, were termed burghbote, brigbote, heregeld, &c. Danegeld was abolished by Edward the Confessor, but levied again by William I. and II. Then it was once more established by Henry I., and finally, by King Stephen. This ancient tax probably might be a precedent for our land-tax for three or four shillings in the pound, when first granted.

The Danes, satisfied with this arrangement, made peace, and many returned to their own country, whilst others remained in the island; and such was the awe they were held in by the people, that, in speaking of them, they invariably styled them the Lord-Danes.

From this custom, there is little doubt but the word lurdane, signifying a rich idle man, had its origin. It is to be met with in writers as late as the reign of Elizabeth, and is still used in some parts of England.

Ethelred, who had grown weary of the contest with his powerful enemies, in which he displayed neither courage nor dignity, hit on an expedient for ridding the island of their presence, which he put into execution shortly after his second marriage with Emma, the sister of Richard II., Duke of Normandy, styled by some writers, on account of her rare loveliness, the Pearl of Normandy.

As might be expected from a weak prince, his project was a cruel one, being neither more nor less than the massacre of all the Danes residing in England. To carry out this barbarous as well as useless policy, a vast conspiracy was entered into; and, on the 13th of November, 1002, all the invaders were put to death, with circumstances of the most shocking barbarity.

Among other cruelties, the Danish women were placed in holes in the earth, as deep as their waists, and then had their breasts torn off by mastiff dogs. The odium of this whole scene of barbarity has been laid on Huna, general of the king's forces, one of his evil counsellors.

The sister of Sweyn was not spared. Her name was Gunilda, and she is said to have been married to a noble Dane settled in England, named Paleng. Being a Christian, she had exerted all her influence with her brother to bring about the peace. Her children were first murdered in her presence, and their unhappy mother afterwards slain.

Sweyn received the news of this massacre by some Danes, who succeeded in getting on board a vessel ready to sail for Denmark. Their relation of the cruelties of the English to those of his nation would have been sufficient to arouse him; but when informed of his sister's barbarous murder, he was seized with all the rage that such a crime was likely to excite in a vindictive nature. He solemnly swore he would never rest till he had revenged the atrocious outrage. It was not, therefore, with intent to plunder, that he made a second expedition into England, but to destroy the whole country with fire and sword. However, as he did not doubt but Ethelred would take precautions to oppose his entrance, he would not sail without securing a place where he might safely land his troops. Cornwall was then governed by Earl Hugh, placed in that important trust by the influence of the queen, in full confidence that, as her countryman, her husband might rely on his devotion and fidelity.

To this man, Sweyn secretly despatched an emissary, with the offer of a great reward, provided he would assist him in his enterprise; the traitor yielded to the temptation, and admitted, not only the fleet of the invader to enter his ports, but the Danes to land without offering the least opposition.

After debarking his forces on the island, Sweyn marched his forces to Exeter, and as the first fruits of his vengeance, not only massacred the inhabitants, but after plundering the city, laid it in ashes. Wherever the furious monarch led his army, the same cruelties were repeated; submission was useless, he knew not the meaning of the word mercy.

Hearing that Elfric, duke of Mercia, was advancing at the head of a powerful army, the Danish king hastened to meet him, certainly without calculating on an easy victory. But the duke having conceived a violent hatred towards Ethelred, on account of some real or fancied injury, deemed that the moment had arrived to take a signal revenge; he feigned himself sick, and commanded a sudden retreat, which he purposely contrived to be made in so disorderly a manner, that the Danes were enabled to attack and rout his army with immense slaughter.

Sweyn afterwards took several other places, which he plundered and burnt, and then retired to Denmark, to pass the winter.

Early the next year, however, he returned, landing, it is supposed, at Yarmouth, and took the city of Norwich, which he burned to the ground. Ulfketel, the governor of

the East Angles, gave him an immense sum of money to induce him to spare that part of the country from any further ravages. Regardless of his promises, the invader had no sooner received the tribute than he attacked Thetford, and destroyed it, which breach of faith so incensed Ulfketel, that he collected as many troops as possible, and posted himself between the invaders and the fleet, in the hope of cutting them off. The Danish king marched back to give him battle, and the English were beaten, after a severe contest. The Danes were afterwards driven from England by the famine.

At the termination of the scarcity another expedition of the enemy landed at Sandwich in Kent, and Ethelred levied an army to oppose them; on hearing which, the Danes retreated to the Isle of Thanet, well knowing that the English, who served at their own expense, would soon disperse. The event proved that their calculation was a just one; tired of waiting for an enemy who refused to come from their stronghold, the soldiers of Ethelred quickly melted away, and the unlucky king only procured a peace upon the payment of six and thirty thousand pounds.

Ethelred on their departure gave one of his daughters in marriage to Edric, surnamed Streon, whom he had lately created duke of Mercia; but his new son-in-law, instead of assisting him, as he had a right to expect, leagued with the Danes and betrayed the kingdom on every occasion. The following year after the treaty, the Danish king demanded a similar sum of thirty-six thousand pounds, pretending that it was a yearly tribute which the English had agreed to pay. Ethelred, by the advice of his council, employed the money in fitting out a powerful fleet, the command of which was given to Buthric, the brother of the new duke of Mercia. This measure obliged the enemy to retire.

Buthric was no sooner in command than he used his authority to ruin Ulnoth, a noble who was his enemy, and began to accuse him of crimes to the king, who lent but too willing an ear to his rival. Finding his ruin determined upon, Ulnoth persuaded nine of the captains of the fleet to put to sea with him, which they did, plundering the English coasts and committing fearful ravages. The admiral, incensed at his escape, set out with eighty ships to give him chase; but a terrible storm arising, he lost a great part of them, and the rest fell into the hands of Ulnoth. Thus was the fleet which should have been the safeguard of the kingdom lost and destroyed.

Taking advantage of this state of affairs, the Danes, who had their spies both in the court and country of England, prepared another expedition. Two fleets arrived in the kingdom; one in East Anglia, under Turkil, and the second in the Isle of Thanet, commanded by two leaders, Kemsig and Anlaff. They attacked the city of Canterbury, and would, doubtless, have destroyed it, had not the inhabitants ransomed it at an enormous sum.

Whilst the Danes were pillaging Kent, Ethelred drew an army together to oppose their ravages; and as soon as he was ready, he posted himself between them and their ships to prevent their embarking, and carrying off their booty. Probably, he might have executed his project, and perhaps gained considerable advantage, considering the superiority of his forces, if Edric had not found means to relieve the Danes. The traitor, perceiving their danger, represented to the king, his father-in-law, that it would be more advantageous to let them retire than hazard a battle, which might prove fatal to him; and this pernicious advice made such impression on the weak-minded monarch, that he suffered them to march by, with all their plunder unmolested. But instead of sailing for Denmark, as it was expected, they threw themselves into the Isle of Thanet; from which, during the whole winter, they made incursions into the neighbouring counties; and even made several attempts upon London; in which, however, they were always repulsed. During this period, Ulfketel, duke of East Anglia, willing once more to try the fortune of a battle in defence of his territory, had the misfortune to be overthrown.

Hitherto the Danes wanted cavalry, on account of the difficulty of transporting horses from Denmark; but as soon as they were in possession of East Anglia, a country abounding with horses, they mounted part of their troops, and by that means extended their conquests. Shortly after, they subdued Essex, Middlesex, Hertfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire, Northamptonshire, Kent, Surrey, Sussex, Hampshire, Wiltshire, and Devonshire, whilst Ethelred, who had scarce anything left, kept himself shut up in London, without daring to take the field and stop their progress. In all the above-named counties, London and Canterbury were the only places in the king's power. But at length they attacked the last so vigorously, that they took, plundered, and reduced it to ashes; and Elphegus, the archbishop, being taken prisoner, was afterwards murdered by these barbarians at Greenwich, to which place, the station of their ships, they had brought him prisoner. In the old church of Greenwich, on the top of the partition wall, between the nave of the church and the chancel, was formerly the following inscription:—"This church was erected and dedicated to the glory of God, and the memory of St. Alphage, archbishop of Canterbury, here slain by the Danes; because he would not ransom his life by an unreasonable sum of money. An. 1012." He was first buried at St. Paul's in London, and afterwards removed to Canterbury. He was honoured as a martyr, and stands in the Roman Martyrology on the 19th of April.

Such was the helpless condition to which the country was reduced that no terms were thought too burdensome to rid it of the invaders, to whom forty-eight thousand pounds were ultimately paid on condition that they quitted England, which they did, taking with them an enormous amount of booty.

But scarcely had they ratified this treaty, when Sweyn entered the Humber with a powerful fleet, and threatened the whole kingdom with desolation and ruin. As this prince found the country unprovided with troops, and unable to defend itself, he quickly became master of Northumbria and East Anglia. But these conquests not satisfying his ambition, he took hostages of all the principal towns; and leaving his son Canute to command the newly-conquered counties, he advanced southward, and on a sudden laid siege to London, where Ethelred was shut up. Though he was but ill provided with necessaries to besiege in form a place of such importance, he imagined the citizens would be terrified at his menaces; but finding they were not moved by them, he desisted from his enterprise, and passed on and ravaged the western parts of Wessex, where he found no opposition to his arms. However, as he could not

be satisfied whilst London was out of his power, he resolved to besiege it once more; but whilst he was preparing for the siege with greater precaution than before, he had information of Ethelred's departure from thence. This unfortunate prince, ever dreading to fall into the hands of an enemy he had so cruelly injured, and perceiving himself unsafe in England, retired into Normandy with all his family; upon which, the Londoners resolved to submit to the king of Denmark, to whom all the rest of the kingdom was now subject; and shortly after this, Sweyn was proclaimed king of England without any opposition, no one in the kingdom daring to dispute his title.

It does not appear that Sweyn was ever crowned. His first act of sovereignty was to levy a heavy tax to pay his Danish troops, by whose assistance he had conquered England. At all events, his reign was brief; some writers

Meeting of Edmund Ironside and Canute, on the Isle of Alney, in the Severn. (See p. 57.)

say that he was poisoned, other writers that he died of a cold: the monkish historians pretend that he was killed by a St. Edmund, formerly king of East Anglia, with a lance, in order to save the town and monastery in which his canonised bones lay from being plundered by the invaders.

On the death of Sweyn, Canute, his son, was proclaimed king; but their common danger had given something like energy and combination to the councils of the English: they recalled Ethelred from his exile in Normandy, and pledged themselves to support him on the throne against the Danes, whose government was arbitrary, cruel, and oppressive.

Ethelred at first was unwilling to trust to their promises, being apprehensive of a design to deliver him into the hands of his enemies; but being encouraged by the reception his son met with, whom he had sent before to sound the people's inclinations, he returned to England, and was received with great demonstrations of joy; and his subjects swore allegiance to him again, as if had begun a new reign, his flight being considered as a sort of abdication of the crown. He, on his part, promised to reform whatever was amiss; and the eagerness of the English to throw off a foreign yoke, made them flock to the king with such zeal and haste, that he soon found himself at the head of a powerful army. His first expedition plainly showed his misfortunes had made no great alteration in him; for instead of marching against the Danes, he made use of his forces to be revenged on the men of Lindsey—one of the three divisions of Lincolnshire; the other two being named Holland and Kesteven. The inhabitants of the first-named place, it appeared, had provided the Danes with horses, and had also offered to join them.

After Ethelred had punished these traitors, he prepared to march, and fight the enemy, who little expected so sudden a revolution.

Although Canute was, undoubtedly, a brave prince, and had the same forces his father Sweyn had conquered England with, he did not think fit to hazard a battle; but on the contrary, before Ethelred was advanced near enough to oblige him to fight, he led his troops to the sea-side, and embarking them, set sail for Denmark. Before his departure, he ordered the hands and feet of the hostages he had in his power to be cut off, leaving them thus mangled on the shore.

The retreat of Canute appears strange, as he had never been worsted, and besides, had many strong places still in his hands; and the only clue that can be obtained as to the cause of this conduct is the account given by the Danish writers, who say that Canute had a younger brother, named

Canute Reproving the Flattery of his Courtiers. (See p. 59.)

Harold, who, being regent in the absence of his father, Sweyn, seized upon Denmark for himself; which obliged Canute to leave England, with a precipitation that seemed to be an effect of fear rather than sound policy.

As soon as Ethelred found himself freed from the Danes, he took no heed of his promise to his subjects; but on the contrary, resumed his old maxims, and imposed, on several pretences, excessive taxes, which raised great murmurings among the nobles and people.

To these causes for public discontent, he added others of

a more private nature, which destroyed all the hopes entertained of his amendment. Morcard and Sifforth, lords of Danish extraction, who had all along firmly adhered to the interest of the king and their new country, were sacrificed to his avarice. To draw these two earls into his power, the king convened a great council at Oxford, where he caused them to be murdered, and then seized their estates, as if they had been condemned by the common forms of justice. Algitha, widow of Sifforth, was shut up in a monastery, to which confinement she was indebted for her after-greatness; for Edmund, the king's eldest son, passing that way some time after, was desirous to see one so renowned for her beauty, and fell so desperately in love with her, that he married her, even against his father's consent.

The calm England enjoyed after the retreat of the Danes lasted but one year. Canute having got possession of the throne of Denmark, immediately re-embarked for England, and when least expected, landed a numerous army at Sandwich. Ethelred, being then unwell, Edmund his son, with Streon, duke of Mercia, his son-in-law, had the command of the army against the Danes; and Edmund soon perceived his brother-in-law was a friend to Canute. This discovery obliged him to invent some pretence to divide the army into two bodies, that he might be separated from him, not daring to punish the traitor, for fear of exciting a revolt in Mercia, where Streon's power was exceedingly great. He also dreaded his father's displeasure, whom he knew could never be convinced that Streon held intelligence with the Danes. Canute, taking advantage of this division of the English forces, made large conquests immediately; and the treacherous Edric, who had joined Edmund with no other view but to betray him, finding he had lost his aim, openly declared for Canute; and this would have been rather an advantage than a detriment to the king's affairs, if the traitor had not carried with him a considerable body of troops, with forty ships of war. This desertion, which proved very serviceable to Canute, was a mortal wound to Ethelred; and the people went over in crowds to the Danes, in proportion as the king's affairs fell to decay; so that even Wessex itself was not very secure.

Canute's expectations daily increasing by these successes, he turned his arms against those of the Mercians who continued in their alliance to the king, and at length, with the assistance of Streon, entirely subdued them. After which he formed a design to attack Ethelred in Wessex itself, where he had the more reason to expect success, as Edric had artfully instilled into the Mercians who were in the English army, a notion that it was a sin to bear arms against a prince in possession of their country; and, consequently, all that Edmund could obtain of these troops, was, that they would follow the king when he commanded the army in person, refusing to fight under any other general. But Ethelred, who was haunted by a suspicion of an intention of delivering him to the Danes, obstinately refused to quit London, and his gallant son had the mortification of seeing his forces disbanded without giving battle.

Meanwhile Canute pursued his career of conquest.

Edmund repaired himself to London, and persuaded the king to visit the army; he did so, but remained a very short time. After which his son joined Uthred, Earl of Northumberland, in ravaging those parts of the kingdom leagued with, or under the government of the Danes.

At this crisis the weak, worn-out monarch fell sick and died, leaving a numerous issue.

He had by his first wife, Elgiva, Edmund, who succeeded him; Athelstan, who died in childhood; Edwy, afterwards murdered by Canute; and three daughters.

Edgiva, the eldest, was married to an English earl who fell in battle.

Edgith, the second, who espoused the traitor Edric, duke of Mercia.

Edgina, the youngest, the wife of Uthred, earl of Northumberland.

By Emma, the Pearl of Normandy, his second queen, Ethelred left two sons, Alfred and Edward, and a daughter named Godda, who first married Walter, the earl of Nantes, and then Eustacius, earl of Boulogne.

CHAPTER XVII.

Reign of Edmund II., surnamed Ironside.

IMMEDIATELY on the death of his father, his son, Edmund, who had given so many proofs of courage and devotion to his unhappy country, was proclaimed king, to the great joy of the English. At the same time the Danes declared for Canute, who was already in possession of a great part of the kingdom. London, however, still held out against him.

This city the Danish monarch felt it necessary to possess; and in the absence of the new king he laid siege to it with a very considerable force; but the citizens defended themselves so bravely, that Edmund had time to pour in such succours as obliged his rival to abandon his attempt.

Both parties were impatient to decide their claims by battle. The armies met, and so obstinately was it contested that neither side could claim the victory: although the English, it is recorded, were near being defeated by the cunning of Edric Streon, who fought on the side of the Danes. Perceiving that the English troops fought with such desperate courage, he cut off the head of Osmer, a soldier who so resembled Edmund that he might easily have been mistaken for him.

Placing the bleeding head upon his lance, he advanced with it to the front of the English army, and exclaimed, "Fly, villains, fly; behold the head of your king in whom you trust."

This stratagem had nearly succeeded; the soldiers of Edmund began to waver; on seeing which, the king threw aside his helmet and rode bareheaded through the ranks, when he was received with cheers of delight.

The battle lasted till night without any decisive advantage on either side. In the morning Edmund intended to renew the battle, but Canute, who had other intentions, retired to his ships and set sail, hastily landed his forces, and besieged London a second time with no better success than the first.

This battle was fought at Sceorstan, which Camden supposes to be Sherston, in Wiltshire; other writers suppose it to have been where four stones, called Shire-stones, part the counties of Oxford, Gloucester, Worcester, and Warwick. Matthew of Westminster relates that the battle lasted two entire days, and that Edric's stratagem occurred on the second.

Edmund, like his father, was doomed to be the victim of treason. In one of his battles, in Essex, he would have vanquished his rival, but for the bad advice of Edric

Streon, who, continually changing sides, as ambition or caprice prompted him, was then in the English army. Although he had sworn to be faithful, he was little better than the spy and agent of the Danish monarch, whose cause he lost no opportunity of serving.

Seeing the Danes in retreat, he advised the king to cease the pursuit, under pretence, that if too hardly pressed, despair might cause them to rally.

The greatest act of treachery occurred at Assandun, where he threw aside the mask, and went over with his troops to the enemy. The English, in the utmost consternation, believing they were betrayed on every side, threw down their arms. Edmund's loss was immense; the chief of his nobility were slain in the defence of their unhappy country.

On the spot where Canute gained this signal victory, now called Ashdun, in Essex, he built a church, and caused four hillocks to be thrown up, in memory of those who fell in the battle. Two of these monuments have been opened; several stone coffins were found filled with bones and iron chains, something like horse-bits.

These hills are known by the name of Bastlow Hills, though situated in Ashdun parish; whence some writers contend that it was Bastlow Church which the Danish conqueror built.

After this triumph, Canute fondly imagined that all serious rivalry between himself and Edmund was at an end; but he knew not the temper of the English, who, roused by the greatness of the danger, made extraordinary efforts for their deliverance.

Edmund had long possessed the affection of the inhabitants of London, who flocked to his standard in such numbers, that in an incredibly short space of time, he found himself at the head of an army more powerful than the one he had lost.

His rival, unwilling to give him too much time to recover his defeat, hastened to meet him; and the two kings, each at the head of his respective army, confronted each other once more; but neither appeared willing to give the signal to commence the contest.

Edmund knew, that if he lost the battle, it was irretrievable ruin to his cause; nor was Canute without apprehension, that in case of a defeat, all the English would rise and unite against him.

In this position, Edmund proposed to decide their claims to the crown in single combat; an offer which his rival declined, under the plea that he was small of stature and of a sickly constitution; but added, that if the English king wished to avoid the effusion of blood, he was quite willing to refer the cause of quarrel between them to arbitration.

To this offer the nobles, who desired to put an end to the war, compelled Edmund to accede, and plenipotentiaries were named on either side; they met on a small island in the Severn, named Alney, opposite Gloucester; and peace was concluded by the division of the kingdom. Wessex, and all the country south of the Thames, including London and the greater portion of the ancient kingdom of Essex, being assigned to Edmund; whilst his rival had Mercia, Northumbria, and East Anglia.

The kings afterwards met on the Isle of Alney, and swore to observe the peace; after which ceremony, they separated.

Edmund did not long enjoy the repose which he had suffered so much to establish: his old enemy, Edric Streon, fearing that his life might be endangered from the union between the two kings, caused him to be assassinated by his chamberlains, whom he bribed to commit the crime.

The murdered king had not occupied the throne a complete year; but even in that short time he had given frequent proofs of an undaunted courage, a consummate prudence, and a generous nature. He was buried next his grandfather Edgar, at Glastonbury; and with him fell the glory of the English Saxons; for by his death the Danes prevailed, and the Saxon monarchy in reality ended, after it had lasted one hundred and ninety years from its establishment by Egbert, four hundred and thirty-two from the founding of the heptarchy, or octarchy, and five hundred and sixty-eight from the arrival of the Saxons under Hengist.

He left, by Algitha, his wife, two sons, Edmund and Edward; and he had also a natural son, named Edwy, who was afterwards put to death by Canute.

The infamous Streon, who prided himself upon doing Canute so signal a service, hastened to carry him the first news of it; but Canute detested the barbarous deed. He however concealed his sentiments at the time, feeling he should have further occasion for him, and consequently promised to advance him above all the nobles of the realm; a promise which he kept in a very different manner from that which the traitor expected.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Reign of Canute the Great—His Reproof to his Courtiers—His Marriage and Death.

Canute saw that the time had arrived in which he might hope to obtain possession of the entire kingdom. For this purpose he caused an assembly of nobles to be convened; and bribed several of them to depose, that by the treaty concluded between himself and Edmund, it had been verbally agreed that in the event of the death of the latter, he was to succeed to his dominions.

Under this pretence, the claims of the English heir were set aside, and Canute became the monarch of the country; the nobility being tired of war, and unwilling to risk their lives and fortunes to support the rights of a prince who was too young to bear the burden of a crown.

Conscious, that whilst the sons of Edmund lived, he held his throne by an insecure tenure, he sent the princes to his ally, the king of Sweden, with secret orders to put them to death on their arrival, and so rid him of his fears.

The Swedish monarch found himself placed in an embarrassing position by this infamous request, and resolved to spare them. But to avoid being drawn into a war with his powerful neighbour, he in his turn sent them to Soloman, king of Hungary, to be educated at his court. The eldest son was afterwards married to a sister of that king; but dying without issue, Soloman gave his sister-in-law, Agatha, daughter of the emperor Henry II., to Edward the younger to wife; she bore him Edgar Atheling, and two daughters—Margaret, afterwards queen of Scotland, and Christina, who became a nun.

Canute, although king of England, was obliged to divide his authority in a great measure with the nobles, by bestowing on them greater territories and jurisdiction.

He created Thurkil duke of East Anglia; Yric had

Northumberland, and Edric Mercia, as the price of their services. The latter, he afterwards, when he found himself more firmly seated, caused to be executed, [illegible] for his many treasons, and his body cast into the Thames.

The new king found himself obliged to levy immense taxes to gratify the rapacity of his followers; he extorted from the people at one time no less than seventy-two thousand pounds, an enormous sum in those days, besides eleven thousand which he levied on London alone. The latter city suffered more in comparison with others, on account of the attachment it had shown his rival. Canute could neither forget nor pardon his having been obliged twice to retire from the seige of that important place.

The removal of Edmund's children into so distant a country as Hungary, was, next to their death, regarded by Canute as the greatest security to his government: he had no farther anxiety, except with regard to Alfred and Edward, who were protected and supported by their uncle, Richard, duke of Normandy. Richard even fitted out a great armament, in order to restore the English princes to the throne of their ancestors; and though the navy was dispersed by a storm, Canute saw the danger to which he was exposed from the enmity of so warlike a people as the Normans. In order to acquire the friendship of the duke, he paid his addresses to queen Emma, sister of that prince; and promised that he would leave the children, whom he might have by that marriage, his heirs to the crown of England. Richard complied with his demand, and sent over Emma to England, where she was soon after married to Canute. The English, though they disapproved of her espousing the mortal enemy of her former husband and his family, were pleased to find at court a sovereign to whom they were accustomed, and who had already formed connections with them: and thus Canute, besides securing by this marriage the alliance of Normandy, gradually acquired, by the same means, the confidence of his own subjects. The Norman prince did not long survive the marriage of Emma; and left the inheritance of the duchy to his eldest son of the same name, who, dying a year after him without children, was succeeded by his brother Robert, a man of valour and abilities.

Canute the Great.

With a degree of savage justice he put to death a great number of the nobility, giving as a reason that it was impossible he could ever trust them, on account of their treachery to their native king. The probability is, that their wealth was the principal cause of their offence.

Having thus got rid of those whom he most feared, Canute determined, if possible, to reconcile the people to his government by justice and impartiality. He not only sent back to Denmark a great number of his followers, but in a general assembly of the states which he convened, restored the Saxon laws and customs, which, during the late distracted times, had fallen into disuse, and made no distinction between Saxon and Dane in the administration of justice.

The latter people he gradually incorporated with his new subjects.

Canute having settled his power in England beyond all

danger of a revolution, made a voyage to Denmark, in order to resist the attacks of the king of Sweden; and he carried along with him a great body of the English, under the command of Earl Godwin. This nobleman had here an opportunity of performing a service, by which he both reconciled the king's mind to the English nation, and, gaining to himself the friendship of his sovereign, laid the foundation of that immense fortune which he acquired to his family. He was stationed next the Swedish camp; and, observing a favourable opportunity, which he was obliged suddenly to seize, he attacked the enemy in the night, drove them from their trenches, threw them into disorder, pursued his advantage, and obtained a decisive victory over them. Next morning, Canute, seeing the English camp entirely abandoned, imagined that those disaffected troops had deserted to the enemy: he was agreeably surprised to find that they were at that time engaged in pursuit of the discomfited Swedes. He was so pleased with his success, and with the manner of obtaining it, that he bestowed his daughter in marriage on Godwin, and treated him ever after with entire confidence and regard.

In another voyage, which he made afterwards to Denmark, in 1028, Canute attacked Norway; and, expelling the just, but unwarlike Olaus, kept possession of his kingdom till the death of that prince. He had now, by his conquests and valour, attained the utmost height of grandeur: having leisure from wars and intrigues, he felt the unsatisfactory nature of all human enjoyments; and, equally weary of the glories and turmoils of this life, he began to cast his view towards that future existence, which it is so natural for the human mind, whether satiated by prosperity or disgusted with adversity, to make the object of its attention. Unfortunately, the spirit which prevailed in that age gave a wrong direction to his devotion. Instead of making compensation to those whom he had injured by his former acts of violence, he employed himself entirely in those exercises of piety which the monks represented as the most meritorious. He built churches, he endowed monasteries, he enriched the ecclesiastics, and he bestowed revenues for the support of chantries at Assington and other places; where he appointed prayers to be said for the souls of those who had there fallen in battle against him. He even undertook a pilgrimage to Rome, where he resided a considerable time: besides obtaining from the pope some privileges for the English school erected there, he engaged all the princes, through whose dominions he was obliged to pass, to desist from the heavy tolls exacted upon English pilgrims.

Canute, who was the greatest and most powerful monarch of his time, being sovereign of Denmark and Norway as well as of England, was not so blinded by his good fortune as to credit the flattery of his courtiers, who fain would have persuaded him that he was all but omnipotent.

To rebuke them, he hit upon the following expedient:—He directed his chair of state to be placed on the sea-side, just as the tide was about to rise; and commanded the waves as they approached to retire at his word; then seated himself as if in full expectation that his orders would be obeyed.

When the sea, however, reached his feet, he turned with an angry frown to his panic-stricken courtiers, and exclaimed—

"Every being in the world is feeble and impotent; omnipotent power exists with God, in whose hands are all the elements of nature. He only can say to the sea—Thus far shalt thou go and no further; and his will level with a nod the towering piles of ambition and greatness."

The only remarkable action which Canute performed after his return from Rome, was an expedition against Scotland. During the reign of Ethelred, a tax of a shilling a hide had been levied on all the lands in England. Malcolm, king of Scotland, who held Cumberland, refused to pay this impost, or to do homage for Cumberland to the crown of England.

On the English monarch approaching the frontier of Scotland with a formidable army, Malcolm consented that his grandson and heir, Duncan, should be put in possession of Cumberland; and thus the prudent king avoided the humiliation of doing homage in his own person, and the disasters of war with his powerful neighbour.

Canute died four years after this enterprise, at Shaftesbury, leaving three sons—Sweyn, Harold, and Hardicanute. Sweyn, whom he had by his first marriage with Alfwen, daughter of the Earl of Hampshire; Hardicanute was in possession of Denmark; Harold, at the time of his father's death, being in England.

CHAPTER XIX.

Harold Harefoot—His brief Reign and Death.

ALTHOUGH the late king, in the treaty he had entered into with Richard, duke of Normandy, at the time of his marriage with Emma, had agreed that his children by her should succeed to the crown of England, he held himself released from the engagement by that prince's death, or considered Hardicanute too young to mount the throne of England: his new subjects requiring a cool head and strong hand to govern them. He therefore nominated Harold, his son by Alfwen, to the crown, after his decease.

This prince had the advantage, not only of his presence on the spot, but of his father's treasures, which he had taken care to secure; and, though last, not least, the warm adherence of his countrymen. On the other hand, Hardicanute was more popular with the English, who regarded him with a certain amount of affection, on account of his being the son of Emma, and having been born in England. His party was espoused also by Earl Godwin, the most influential noble in the kingdom, especially in the province of Wessex, the chief seat of the ancient English.

Affairs were likely to terminate in a civil war; when, by the interposition of the nobility of both parties, a compromise was made; and it was agreed that Harold should enjoy, together with London, all the provinces north of the Thames, while the possession of the south should remain to Hardicanute; and till that prince should appear and take possession of his dominions, Emma fixed her residence at Winchester, and established her authority over her son's share of the partition.

Meanwhile Robert, duke of Normandy died in a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and being succeeded by a son, yet a minor, the two English princes, Alfred and Edward, who found no longer any countenance or protection in that country, gladly embraced the opportunity of paying a visit, with a numerous retinue, to their mother Emma, who seemed to be placed in a state of so much power and

splendour at Winchester. But the face of affairs soon wore a melancholy aspect: Earl Godwin had been gained by the arts of Harold, who promised to espouse the daughter of that nobleman; and while the treaty was yet a secret, these two tyrants laid a plan for the destruction of the English princes. Alfred was invited to London by Harold, with many professions of friendship; but when he had reached Guildford, he was set on by Godwin's vassals; nearly six hundred of his train were murdered in the most cruel manner; and himself was taken prisoner, his eyes were put out, and he was conducted to the monastery of Ely, where he died soon after. Edward and Emma, apprised of the fate which was awaiting them, fled beyond sea, the former into Normandy, the latter into Flanders; while Harold, triumphing in his bloody policy, took possession, without resistance, of all the dominions assigned to his brother.

This is the only memorable action performed, during a reign of four years, by this prince, who gave so bad a specimen of his character, and whose bodily accomplishments alone are known to us by his appellation of Harefoot, which he acquired from his agility in running and walking. He died on the 14th of April, 1039, little regretted or esteemed by his subjects, leaving the crown to his half-brother, Hardicanute.

Harold Swearing to maintain the Right of the Duke of Normandy to the Throne of England.

The Death of Hardicanute. (See page 62.)

CHAPTER XX.

Hardicanute—His Violent Reign and Death.

HARDICANUTE, or Canute the Strong, had never resigned his pretensions to the crown of England; and the country was only spared the horrors of a civil war by the death of the late king. Under pretence of visiting the widowed queen in Flanders, he had assembled a fleet of sixty ships; his real intention being to make a descent upon England. The news of Harold's death induced him at once to set sail. He shortly afterwards entered London in triumph, and was acknowledged king without opposition.

The first act of Hardicanute's government afforded his subjects a bad prognostic of his future conduct. He was so enraged at Harold for depriving him of his share of the

kingdom, and for the cruel treatment of his brother Alfred, that, in an impotent desire of revenge against the dead, he ordered his body to be dug up, and to be thrown into the Thames; and when it was found by some fishermen, and buried in London, he ordered it again to be dug up, and to be thrown once more into the river; but it was fished up a second time, and then interred with great secrecy. Godwin, equally servile and insolent, submitted to be his instrument in that unnatural and brutal action.

That nobleman knew that he was universally believed to have been an accomplice in the barbarity exercised on Alfred, and that he was on that account obnoxious to Hardicanute: and perhaps he hoped, by displaying this rage against Harold's memory, to justify himself from having had any participation in his counsels; but prince Edward, being invited over by the king, immediately on his appearance preferred an accusation against Godwin for the murder of Alfred, and demanded justice for that crime. Godwin, in order to appease the king, made him a magnificent present of a galley with a gilt stern, rowed by fourscore men, who wore each of them a gold bracelet on his arm, weighing sixteen ounces, and were armed and clothed in the most sumptuous manner. Hardicanute, pleased with the splendour of this spectacle, quickly forgot his brother's murder; and, on Godwin's swearing that he was innocent of the crime, he allowed him to be acquitted.

Though Hardicanute, before his accession, had been called over by the vows of the English, he soon lost the affections of the nation by his misconduct; but nothing appeared more grievous to them, than his renewing the imposition of Danegelt, and obliging the nation to pay a great sum of money to the fleet which brought him from Denmark. The discontents ran high in many places: in Worcester the populace rose, and put to death two of the collectors. The king, enraged at this opposition, swore vengeance against the city, and ordered three noblemen, Godwin, duke of Wessex, Siward, duke of Northumberland, and Leofric, duke of Mercia, to execute his orders with the utmost rigour. They were obliged to set fire to the city, and deliver it up to be plundered by their soldiers; but they saved the lives of the inhabitants, whom they confined in a small island of the Severn, called Beverly, till by their intercession they were enabled to appease the anger of the tyrant. This violent reign was of short duration. Hardicanute died two years after his accession in consequence of his excesses in drinking. This event took place at the marriage feast of a Danish nobleman at Lambeth.

CHAPTER XXI.

Edward the Confessor—His Life and Reign.

The English, on the death of Hardicanute, saw that a favourable opportunity had occurred for recovering their ancient independence, and shaking off the Danish yoke, which was insufferably galling to proud and spirited people.

Prince Edward was fortunately at court at the time of his brother's death; and though the true Saxon heir was the descendant of Edmund Ironsides, the absence of that prince in Hungary appeared a sufficient reason for his exclusion: delays might be dangerous; the occasion might not again present itself, and must be eagerly embraced before the Danes, now left in the island without a leader, had time to recover from the confusion into which the death of their king had thrown them.

But this concurrence of circumstances in favour of Edward might have failed of its effect, had his succession been opposed by Godwin, whose power, alliances, and abilities gave him a great influence at all times, especially amidst those sudden opportunities which always attend a revolution of government, and which, either seized or neglected, commonly prove decisive. There were opposite reasons which divided men's hopes and fears with regard to Godwin's conduct. On the one hand, the credit of that nobleman lay chiefly in Wessex, which was almost entirely inhabited by English: it was therefore presumed that he would second the wishes of that people in restoring the Saxon line, and in humbling the Danes, from whom he, as well as they, had reason to dread, as they had already felt, the most grievous oppressions: on the other hand, there existed a declared animosity between Edward and Godwin on account of Alfred's murder, of which the latter had publicly been accused by the prince, and which he might believe so deep an offence, as could never, on account of any subsequent merits, be sincerely pardoned. But their common friends here interposed; and, representing the necessity of their reconciliation, obliged them to lay aside all jealousy and rancour, and concur in restoring liberty to their native country. Godwin only stipulated that Edward, as a pledge of his sincerity, should promise to marry his daughter, Editha; and, having fortified himself by this alliance, he summoned a general council at Gillingham, and prepared every measure for securing the succession to Edward. The English were unanimous and zealous in their resolutions; the Danes were divided and dispirited: any small opposition which appeared in this assembly was brow-beaten and suppressed; and Edward was crowned king, with every demonstration of duty and affection.

The triumph of the English, on this signal and decisive advantage, was at first attended with some insult and violence against the Danes; but the king, by the mildness of his character, soon reconciled the latter to his administration, and the distinction between the two nations gradually disappeared. The Danes were interspersed with the English in most of the provinces, and spoke nearly the same language.

The joy of their deliverance made such an impression on the English, that they had an annual festival, which was observed in some countries even to the time of Spelman.

The popularity of Edward's accession was not destroyed by the first act of his administration, which was to resume all grants made by his immediate predecessors—a stretch of power, in most instances, attended by dangerous consequences to the kingly authority and the well-being of the state.

The poverty of the crown convinced the people of its necessity; and as these grants had been lavished chiefly upon their enemies, the Danes, as rewards for their services in opposing them, the English regarded it as an act of justice rather than one of spoliation.

The new king treated his mother, the Queen Dowager, not only with coldness, but some degree of severity, on account of her having neglected him in his adversity. He accused her of preferring her son by Canute, to his brother and himself, which, when the characters of her first and second husband are compared, appears by no means improbable. He stripped her of the great wealth she had amassed;

and confined her for the rest of her life in a convent at Winchester.

The accusation of her having been a party to the murder of her son Alfred, and of her criminal intercourse with the Bishop of Winchester, which she is said to have cleared herself from by walking barefoot over nine red-hot ploughshares, must be regarded as tradition merely.

The English fondly believed that by the accession of Edward, they had delivered themselves for ever from the dominion of foreigners; but they soon found that they were in error: for the king, who had been educated at the court of his uncle in Normandy, had contracted so strong an affection for the natives of that country that his court was speedily filled by them.

This partiality will be considered by no means an unnatural one, when it is remembered that the natives of that populous and wealthy state were far more polished than the comparatively rude, unlettered Saxons, and their culture superior. The example of the monarch was not without its influence; the courtiers imitated the Normans both in dress and manners. The French became the language not only of the court, but of law; even the church felt its influence, Edward creating Ulf and William, two Norman priests, bishops of Dorchester and London. Robert, another native of the same country, was soon afterwards elevated to the primacy.

All these changes gradually excited the jealousy of the English nation; although it may be justly doubted whether the most far-sighted amongst them foresaw that it was gradually preparing the way for a fresh conquest of the country.

Amongst those who bitterly resented the innovation, were earl Godwin and his sons, the most powerful nobles in Britain.

The father, besides being duke or earl of Wessex, for the title was indiscriminately used, had the counties of Kent and Sussex annexed to his government. His eldest son, Sweyn, possessed the same authority in Oxford, Berkshire, Gloucester, and Hereford; whilst Harold, the second son, was duke of East Anglia and governor of Essex.

The influence of this family was supported not only by immense possessions, but great personal talents; qualities which the ambition of Godwin rendered still more dangerous.

A prince of greater capacity and vigour than Edward would have found it difficult to support the dignity of the crown under such circumstances; and, as the haughty temper of Godwin made him often forget the respect due to his prince, Edward's animosity against him was grounded on personal as well as political considerations, on recent as well as more ancient injuries. The king, in pursuance of his engagements, had indeed married Editha, the daughter of Godwin; but this alliance became a fresh source of enmity between them. Edward's hatred of the father was transferred to that princess; and Editha, though possessed of many amiable accomplishments, could never acquire the confidence and affection of her husband. It is even pretended that, during the whole course of her life, he abstained from all commerce of love with her; and such was the absurd admiration paid to an inviolable chastity during those ages, that his conduct in this particular is highly celebrated by the monkish historians, and greatly contributed to his acquiring the title of saint and confessor.

The most popular pretence on which Godwin could ground his disaffection to the king and his administration, was to complain of the influence of the Normans in the government; and a declared opposition had thence arisen between him and these favourites. It was not long before this animosity broke into action. Eustace, count of Boulogne, having paid a visit to the king, passed by Dover in his return: one of his train, being refused entrance to a lodging which had been assigned him, attempted to make his way by force, and in the contest he wounded the master of the house. The inhabitants revenged this insult by the death of the stranger; the count and his train took arms, and murdered the wounded townsman; a tumult ensued; near twenty persons were killed on each side; and Eustace, being overpowered by numbers, was obliged to save his life by flight from the fury of the populace. He hurried immediately to court, and complained of the usage he had met with. The king entered zealously into the quarrel, and was highly displeased, that a stranger of such distinction, whom he had invited over to his court, should, without any just cause, as he believed, have been exposed to such insult and danger. Edward felt so sensibly the insolence of his people, that he gave orders to Godwin, in whose government Dover lay, to repair immediately to the place, and to punish the inhabitants for the crime: but Godwin, who desired rather to encourage than repress the popular discontents against foreigners, refused obedience, and endeavoured to throw the whole blame of the riot on the count of Boulogne and his retinue. Edward, touched in so sensible a point, saw the necessity of exerting the royal authority; and he threatened Godwin, if he persisted in his disobedience, to make him feel the utmost effects of his resentment.

The earl, perceiving a rupture to be unavoidable, and pleased to embark in a cause where it was likely he should be supported by his countrymen, made preparations for his own defence, or rather for an attack on Edward. Under pretence of repressing some disorders on the Welsh frontier, he secretly assembled a great army, and was approaching the king, who resided, without any military force, and without suspicion, at Gloucester. Edward applied for protection to Siward, duke of Northumberland, and Leofric, duke of Mercia, two powerful noblemen, whose jealousy of Godwin's greatness, as well as their duty to the crown, engaged them to defend the king in this extremity. They hastened to him, with such of their followers as they could assemble on a sudden; and finding the danger much greater than they had at first apprehended, they issued orders for mustering all the forces within their respective governments, and for marching them without delay to the defence of the king's person and authority. Edward, meanwhile, endeavoured to gain time by negotiation; while Godwin, who thought the king entirely in his power, and who was willing to save appearances, fell into the snare; and not sensible that he ought to have no farther reserve after he had proceeded so far, he lost the favourable opportunity of rendering himself master of the government.

The English, though they had no idea of Edward's vigour and capacity, bore him great affection on account of his humanity, justice, and piety, as well as the long race of their native kings from whom he was descended; and they hastened from all quarters to defend him from the

present danger. His army was now so considerable, that he ventured to take the field; and, marching to London, he summoned a general council of the nation, to judge the rebellion of Godwin and his sons.

These nobles affected at first a willingness to stand their trial, but demanded hostages for their safety, which were indignantly refused. Soon afterwards, finding themselves deserted by the majority of their adherents, they disbanded their remaining forces and fled the country.

Baldwin, count of Flanders, gave shelter and protection to the earl and three of his sons, Gurth, Sweyn, and Tosti; the last being his son-in-law.

Harold and Leofwin, two younger brothers, took refuge in Ireland.

Godwin himself had fixed his influence too strongly in England, and had too many allies, not to make some efforts to retrieve his misfortunes. The earl of Flanders permitted him, in 1052, to fit out an expedition in his harbours, which he directed towards Sandwich; but was compelled to retreat before the numerous fleet which Edward equipped against him.

The exile appears to have been far more politic and clear-sighted than the king, who, satisfied with his success, and deeming his enemy completely crushed, disbanded his men and neglected his ships, whilst Godwin kept his in readiness. Deeming the time at last had come, he put to sea once more, and sailed for the Isle of Wight, where he was joined by his son, Harold, with considerable succours collected in Ireland.

Being now master of the sea, he plundered all the harbours on the southern coast, burning the ships of Edward, and called upon his followers in those counties which owned his authority to take arms in his cause. The appeal was not made in vain; such numbers flocked to his standard that he entered the Thames, and caused great terror to the citizens of London.

The king alone showed the resolution to oppose the rebels and defend the city to the last extremity. The nobles, however, fearing a civil war, and many of them conceiving Godwin to have reason, induced Edward to listen to terms of accommodation, which the affected humility of the earl, who declared that he only demanded a fair and impartial trial, materially assisted. It was stipulated that he should give hostages for his future loyalty and peaceable conduct; and that the primate, and all foreigners, should be sent out of the realm. Godwin died shortly afterwards, whilst sitting at table with the king. He was succeeded in the government of Sussex, Kent, and Essex, as well as in the office of Steward of the Household, by his son Harold, who, equally ambitious as his father, possessed more prudence and address. By a modest, sensible line of conduct, he succeeded in obtaining the favour of the king, and daily increased the number of his partisans till his authority equalled that of the monarch himself.

Edward, who saw that his subject was becoming his equal, attempted to raise a rival to him in the person of Algar, son of Leofric, duke of Mercia, whom he invested with the government of East Anglia; but Algar was speedily expelled from his government by the intrigues of Harold, who bitterly resented his nomination, the government of that province having been formerly in his own family.

This check, however, was not of long continuance. The young noble having married the daughter of Griffith, prince of Wales, the influence of his father-in-law, backed by the authority of Edward, quickly re-instated him.

This peace was not of long duration: Harold, taking advantage of Leofric's death, which happened soon after, expelled Algar anew, and banished him the kingdom; and though that nobleman made a fresh irruption into East Anglia with an army of Norwegians, and overran the country, his death soon freed Harold from the pretensions of so dangerous a rival. Edward, the eldest son of Algar, was indeed advanced to the government of Mercia; but the balance which the king desired to establish between those potent families was wholly lost, and the influence of Harold greatly preponderated.

The death of Siward, duke of Northumberland, in 1055, made the way still more open to the ambition of that nobleman. Siward, besides his other merits, had acquired honour to England by his successful conduct in the only foreign enterprise undertaken during the reign of Edward. Duncan, king of Scotland, was a prince of a gentle disposition, but possessed not the genius requisite for governing a country so turbulent, and so much infested by the intrigues and animosities of the great. Macbeth, a powerful nobleman, and nearly allied to the crown, not content with curbing the king's authority, carried still further his pestilent ambition: he put his sovereign to death; chased Malcolm Kenmure, his son and heir, into England; and usurped the crown. Siward, whose daughter was married to Duncan, embraced, by Edward's orders, the protection of this distressed family he marched an army into Scotland; and having defeated and killed Macbeth in battle, he restored Malcolm to the throne of his ancestors. This service, added to his former connections with the royal family of Scotland, brought a great accession to the authority of Siward in the north; but as he had lost his eldest son, Osberne, in the action with Macbeth, it proved in the issue fatal to his family. His second son, Waltheof, appeared, on his father's death, too young to be entrusted with the government of Northumberland; and Harold's influence obtained that dukedom for his own brother, Tosti.

There are two circumstances related of Siward, which discover his high sense of honour, and his martial disposition. When intelligence was brought to him of his son Osberne's death, he was inconsolable, till he heard that the wound was received in the breast, and that he had behaved with great gallantry in the action. When he found his own death approaching, he ordered his servants to clothe him in a complete suit of armour; and sitting erect on the couch, with a spear in his hand, declared that in that posture, the only one worthy of a warrior, he would patiently await the fatal moment.

The king, now worn out with cares and infirmities, felt himself far advanced in the decline of life; and having no issue himself, began to think of appointing a successor to the kingdom. He sent a deputation to Hungary, to invite over his nephew, Edward, son of his elder brother, and the only remaining heir of the Saxon line. That prince, whose succession to the crown would have been easy and undisputed, came to England with his children, Edgar, surnamed Atheling, Margaret, and Christina; but his death, which happened a few days after his arrival, threw the king into new difficulties. He saw that the great power and ambition of Harold had tempted him to think of obtaining possession

of the throne on the first vacancy; and that Edgar, on account of his youth and inexperience, was very unfit to oppose the pretensions of so popular and enterprising a rival. The animosity which he had long borne to earl Godwin made him averse to the succession of his son; and he could not, without extreme reluctance, think of an increase of grandeur to a family which had risen on the ruins of royal authority, and which, by the murder of Alfred, his brother, had contributed so much to the weakening of the Saxon line. In this uncertainty, he secretly cast his eye towards his kinsman, William, duke of Normandy, as the only person whose power, and reputation, and capacity, could support any destination which he might make in his favour, to the exclusion of Harold and his family.

This famous prince was natural son of Robert, duke of Normandy, by Harlotta, daughter of a tanner in Falaise, and was very early established in that grandeur from which his birth seemed to have set him at so great a distance. While he was but nine years of age, his father had resolved to undertake a pilgrimage to Jerusalem;—a fashionable act of devotion, which had taken the place of the pilgrimages to Rome, and which, as it was attended with more difficulty and danger, and carried those religious enthusiasts to the cradle of Christianity, appeared to them more meritorious. Before setting out on his expedition, he assembled the states of his duchy, and induced them to swear allegiance to his son William; whom, as he had no legitimate issue, he designated his successor, in the event of his never returning.

The duke died whilst engaged in this pilgrimage; and the minority of his son afforded to the luxurious nobles full scope for the gratification of their passions.

But the great qualities which the young prince soon displayed, encouraged his friends, and struck consternation to his enemies: he appeared himself in arms, on all sides, to his turbulent and rebellious subjects; and obliged Henri I., of France, who thought it a favourable occasion to repress a too powerful subject, to conclude a peace upon honourable conditions.

The tranquillity which William, after many efforts, succeeded in establishing, gave him leisure to pay Edward a visit in England, during the period of Earl Godwin's exile in Flanders. He was received in a manner suitable to his reputation, and the near relationship between them, by the Saxon monarch, who began to think of nominating the young duke of Normandy as his successor.

This occurred before the return of Harold, who now proceeded, in a more open manner, to prepare the way to the throne, by using every means to increase his popularity with the people: from the age and great infirmities of the king, he foresaw that the vacancy could not be long distant; but there was still an obstacle to be vanquished.

Earl Godwin, his father, had given hostages for his future loyalty and peaceable conduct; and these hostages, amongst whom were one son and grandson of the ambitious noble, Edward, for greater security, as has been related, had consigned to the custody of the duke of Normandy. Harold, though not aware of the duke's being his competitor, was uneasy that such near relations should be detained prisoners in a foreign country; and he was afraid lest William should, in favour of Edgar, retain these pledges as a check on the ambition of any other pretender. He represented, therefore, to the king his unfeigned submission to royal authority; his steady duty to his prince; and the little necessity there was, after such a uniform trial of his obedience, to detain any longer those hostages who had been required on the first composing of civil discords. By these topics, enforced by his great power, he extorted the king's consent to release them; and in order to effect his purpose, he immediately proceeded, with a numerous retinue, on his journey to Normandy. A tempest drove him on the territory of Guy, count of Ponthieu, who, being informed of his quality, immediately detained him prisoner, and demanded an exorbitant sum for his ransom. Harold found means to convey intelligence of his situation to the duke of Normandy; and represented, that while he was proceeding to his court, in execution of a commission from the king of England, he had met with this harsh treatment from the mercenary disposition of the count of Ponthieu.

William was immediately sensible of the importance of the incident: he foresaw, that if he could once gain Harold, either by favours or menaces, his way to the throne of England would be open, and Edward would meet with no farther obstacle in executing the favourable intentions which he had entertained in his behalf. He sent, therefore, a messenger to Guy, in order to demand the liberty of his prisoner; and that nobleman, not daring to refuse so great a prince, put Harold into the hands of the Norman, who conducted him to Rouen. William received him with every demonstration of respect and friendship; and after showing himself disposed to comply with his desire, in delivering up the hostages, he took an opportunity of disclosing to him the great secret of his pretensions to the crown of England, and of the will which Edward intended to make in his favour. He desired the assistance of Harold in perfecting that design; he made professions of the utmost gratitude in return for so great an obligation; he promised that the present grandeur of Harold's family, which supported itself with difficulty owing to the jealousy of Edward, should receive fresh increase from a successor who would be so much beholden to him for his advancement. Harold concealed his surprise and consternation at the intelligence; but conscious that he could not regain either his own liberty, or that of his brother and nephew, affected compliance, and declared his firm intention of maintaining the will of the Confessor.

William offered him one of his daughters in marriage, as a means of binding him still more strongly to his interests; and proposed that he should take an oath to keep his promise, to which Harold reluctantly assented.

Then occurred one of those remarkable scenes so common in the superstitious age in which the principal actors of it flourished. William caused the most celebrated relics of the saints and martyrs to be brought from the churches, and secretly placed beneath the covering of the altar on which the English noble was to take the oath. No sooner were the solemn words pronounced, than the prelate who had administered them drew off the cloth, and displayed the holy collection. Harold was appalled.

"Behold," exclaimed William, "the relics of God's blessed saints and martyrs—not one of them but is a witness of the oath you have just taken. Beware how you violate it, for they will feel themselves bound in honour to avenge it."

This speech, so highly characteristic of the times, and the belief of the age, was not without its effect upon Harold, who, once more, renewed the promises he had

made, and was soon afterwards dismissed from Normandy in all courtesy and honour.

No sooner, however, had Harold returned to his native country, than he began to reflect on the engagement he had taken, and attempted to justify the breach he already meditated, by the fact that it had been extorted by fear, and that, if fulfilled, it might ultimately subject England to the yoke of a foreign power, which had already caused such miseries to his fellow-countrymen.

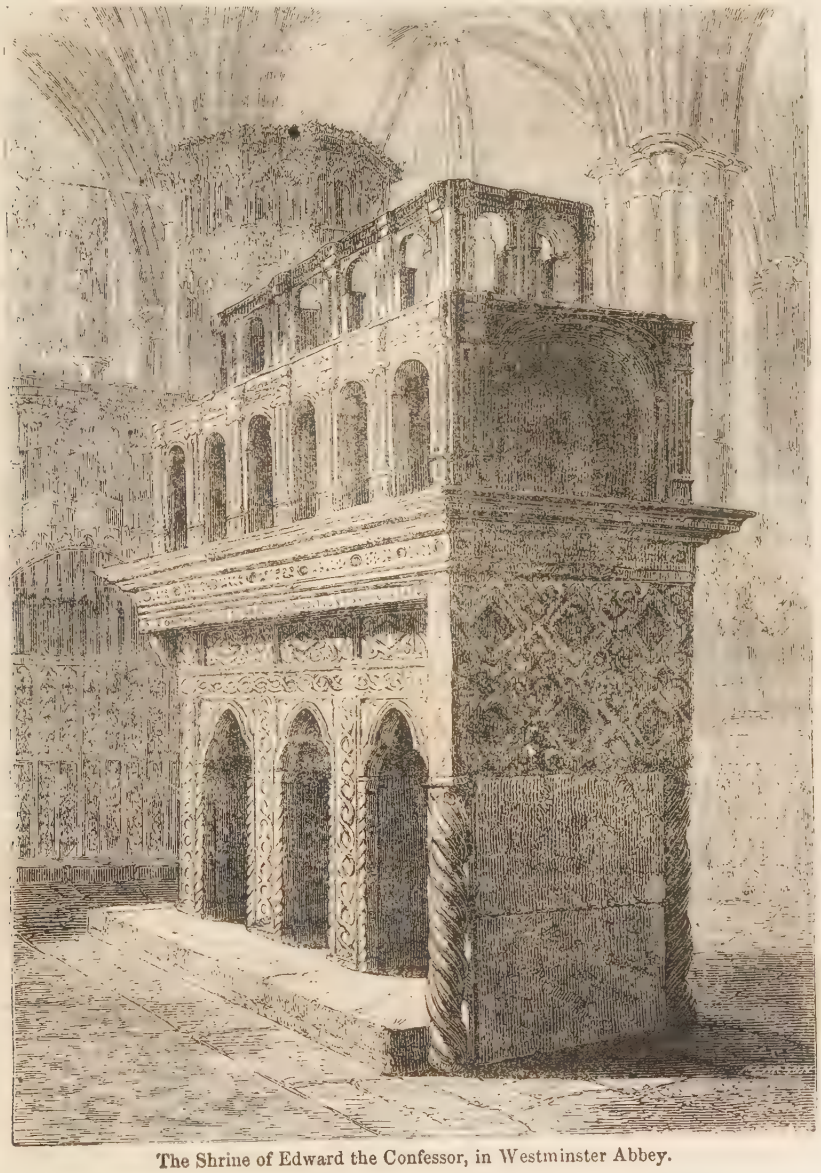
He still continued, therefore, to practice every art to increase his popularity; in the hope, by thus displaying his power and popularity before Edward, to prevent the aged monarch from carrying out his intentions in favour of his rival.

Fortune, shortly after his arrival in England, favoured him by giving him two occasions of distinguishing himself. The first was an expedition against the Welsh, who had long been accustomed to infest and plunder the western borders of the kingdom, and, after spoiling the country, retreat to their own mountain fastnesses.

Griffith, the reigning prince, had greatly distinguished himself in those incursions; and his name had become so terrible to the English, that Harold found he could do nothing more acceptable to the public, and more honourable for himself, than the suppressing of so dangerous an enemy. He formed the plan of an expedition against Wales; and having prepared some light-armed foot to pursue the natives into their fastnesses, some cavalry to scour the open country, and a squadron of ships to attack the sea-coast, he employed at once all these forces against the Welsh, prosecuted his

William, Duke of Normandy.

advantages with vigour, made no intermission in his assaults, and at last reduced the enemy to such distress, that, in order to prevent their total destruction, they made a sacrifice of their prince, whose head they cut off, and sent to Harold; and they were content to receive as their sovereigns two Welsh noblemen appointed by Edward to rule over them. The other incident was no less honourable to Harold.



The Shrine of Edward the Confessor, in Westminster Abbey.

Tosti, brother of this nobleman, who had been created duke of Northumberland, being of a violent, tyrannical temper, had acted with such cruelty and injustice, that the inhabitants rose in rebellion, and chased him from his government; Morcar and Edwin, two brothers, who possessed great power in those parts, and who were grandsons of the great duke Leofric, concurred in the insurrection; and the former, being elected duke, advanced with an army to oppose Harold, who was commissioned by the king to reduce and chastise the Northumbrians. Before the armies came to action, Morcar, well acquainted with the generous disposition of the English commander, endeavoured to justify his own conduct: he represented to Harold, that Tosti had behaved in a manner unworthy of the station to which he was advanced; and no one, not even a brother, could support such tyranny, without participating, in some degree, in the infamy attending it; that the Northumbrians, accustomed to a legal administration, and regarding it as their birthright, were willing to submit to the king, but required a governor who would pay regard to their rights and privileges; that they had been taught by their ancestors, that death was preferable to servitude, and had taken the field, determined to perish rather than suffer a renewal of those indignities to which they had long been exposed, and they trusted that Harold, on reflection, would not defend in another the violence he had repressed in his own government.

This remonstrance was accompanied by such proofs of the justice of the complaints, that Harold felt himself compelled to abandon his brother's cause; and, returning to Edward, persuaded the king to pardon the Northumbrians, and to confirm Morcar in the government. He afterwards married the sister of that nobleman.

Tosti, in a rage, quitted England, and took refuge with his father-in-law, the earl of Flanders.

By this union, William perceived that Harold had broken faith with him, and naturally considered, that if he had done so in espousing another than his daughter, to whom he had previously engaged himself, that no reliance could be placed upon his oath; and began to despair of success, for his rival's conduct had gained him the universal approbation of his countrymen.

Harold now openly declared his pretensions to the succession which the aged Edward was too irresolute either to oppose or arrest. Whilst things were in this state, he was surprised by sickness, and died on the 5th of January, 1066, in the sixty-fifth year of his age, and the twenty-fifth of his reign.

This prince, to whom the church has given the title of saint and confessor, was the last of the Saxon line that ruled in England. Though his reign was peaceable and fortunate, he owed his prosperity less to his own abilities than to the conjunctures of the times: the Danes, employed in other enterprises, attempted not those incursions which had been so troublesome to all his predecessors, and fatal to some of them. The facility of his disposition made him acquiesce under the government of Godwin and his son Harold; and the abilities, as well as the power of these noblemen, enabled them, while they were entrusted with authority, to preserve domestic peace and tranquillity. The most commendable circumstance of Edward's government was his attention to the administration of justice; and his compiling, for that purpose, a body of laws, which he collected from the laws of Ethelbert, Ina, and Alfred. This compilation, though now lost, (for the laws that pass under Edward's name were composed afterwards,) was long the object of affection to the English nation.

Edward the Confessor was the first that touched for the king's evil: the opinion of his sanctity procured belief to this cure among the people; and many of his successors regarded it as a part of their state and grandeur to uphold the same opinion.

Queen Anne, we believe, was the last sovereign who practised it.

CHAPTER XXII.

State of the Church from Ethelred II. to the Death of Edward the Confessor.

Amongst the canons of the church generally ascribed to Elfric, the thirty-third obliges the priests to have two sorts of sacred oil or chrism, one for the sick, and another for children, and enjoins that the former should always be anointed in their beds.

In the same canon the first four general councils are declared of equal authority as the gospels.

From the beginning of the reign of Ethelred II. to the Norman conquest, we find in the ecclesiastical history of England but two councils. Most probably, the wars with the Danes prevented the bishops from assembling more frequently, or perhaps were the occasion of the records of these conventions being lost. Both these councils, the one held at Engsham, and the other at Haba, assembled whilst Elphegus was archbishop. They consisted of seculars as well as ecclesiastics, and the constitutions passed there related both to church and state. The most remarkable canons are as follow:—

In the council of Engsham, the second canon enjoins the celibacy of the clergy.

The ninth forbids all persons to do any wrong to the church, or eject a clergyman out of his benefice without the consent of the bishop.

By the seventeenth, every Friday was to be a fast, unless it fell upon a holiday.

The nineteenth enjoins widows to stay twelve months after the death of their husbands, before they marry again.

The twentieth enjoins frequent confessions, and the people are ordered to receive the sacrament three times, at least, in a year.

The council of Haba has but one canon worth notice; namely, the second, by which every Christian was obliged to fast three days with bread and water, before the feast of St. Michael, and to distribute among the poor what he should have eaten in these three days.

These are the only canons worth remarking in these two synods; but to supply the want of councils, we have the ecclesiastical laws of Canute the Great, and Edward the Confessor; some of which are inserted, to show the great regard these two monarchs had for the clergy. The following are Canute's:—

The fourth, enjoins all Christians to pay great respect to the clergy, because their sacerdotal functions are extremely beneficial to the people.

By the fifth, if a priest was accused of any crime, he had the liberty of purging himself by saying mass, and receiving the eucharist.

The twelfth recommends celibacy to the clergy, and ranks them among the thanes of the second class; that is, among the gentry.

The twentieth ordains that at funerals the dues shall be paid upon the breaking up of the ground; and that the dues shall be paid to the parish the deceased belonged to, though he was buried elsewhere.

The twenty-second enjoins the observance of Sunday from Saturday at three o'clock in the afternoon, till Monday at break of day.

The twenty-third determines the times of fasting, and places the vigils of the festivals of the blessed Virgin and of the apostles among the fasts.

There are several others, relating to the payment of tithes and Peter-pence, the violators of the privileges of the clergy, and the like, in favour of the church.

It is also decreed by these laws, that every Christian should learn the Lord's Prayer, and the Apostles' Creed; otherwise, they were allowed neither to stand godfather, nor receive the communion, nor have Christian burial.

The ecclesiastical laws of Edward the Confessor relate chiefly to the protection of the church and clergy.

The first forbids the molesting a clergyman, contrary to the tenour of the privileges of the church.

The second appoints certain days, whereon all proceedings in the courts of justice were to cease.

By the third the church's causes are to be tried first.

The fourth firmly establishes the immunities of those who, in anywise, depend on the church; and ordains that they shall not be obliged to answer any plea, &c., except in the ecclesiastical court.

The fifth confirms the privilege of sanctuary to churches, and extends it even to priests' houses.

By the sixth, if any person broke in upon the privileges of the church, he had no way of being relieved but by submitting to the sentence of the bishop.

The sixth orders the punctual payment of tithes, and sets forth what is to be paid.

and easy princes, or such as stood in need of their interest.

But, notwithstanding the great consideration of the Saxon kings for the clergy, they could not retain the privilege of choosing their bishops and abbots. Whilst the prelates confined themselves within the bounds of their pastoral functions, and meddled not with civil matters, the power of electing was freely left to the chapters; but when the bishops became rich and popular, and began to interpose in state affairs, by reason of the fiefs they were possessed of, it was of great consequence to the kings to have

Building of the Tower of Babel.—From a Saxon MS.

The ninth determines the circumstances relating to the ordeal trial.

The twelfth settles the fine of manbote, or the sum to be paid to the lord for killing any of his vassals or slaves; the king's and the archbishop's manbote is fixed at the same sum.

By the thirteenth, all treasure found belongs to the king, unless it be found in a church or churchyard; then the gold is the king's, and the silver the church's.

It is visible, throughout these laws, that the clergy took care of themselves, when they came in contact with devout

such bishops and abbots as were in their interest, or, at least, were obliged to them for their preferments. Accordingly, the kings began to interpose in elections, by way of canvassing, or recommendation, and very often by refusing to put in possession of the fiefs belonging to the church or abbey such prelates and abbots as they did not like; and, ultimately, the authority of the court prevailed so, that in the time of Ethelred II., the monks had entirely lost the privilege of choosing their abbots, as appears from Ingulphus; who says, "In those days the monks and abbots seldom resorted to court. But ever since the kings

have disposed of the abbeys, the monks have made interest with the courtiers, which sometimes cost them very dear." The historian himself loudly complains of this abuse, though he was installed in the abbey of Croyland by the same method, that is, by the sole will and pleasure of William the Conqueror.

There were but two removals of bishops' sees within the period now treated of. The see of Kirton, in Wessex, was removed to Exeter, and the see of Lindisfarn, in Northumberland, to Durham. Aldhun, bishop of Lindisfarn, being disturbed in that small island by the incursions of the Danes, removed to Durham, carrying with him the relics of St. Cuthbert, where he built a cathedral, and fixed his see, which remains there to this day.

In 981, the archiepiscopal see of Canterbury acquired a new jurisdiction in Wales. Gucan, a Welsh priest, being chosen bishop of Llandaff, and consecrated by Archbishop Dunstan, this precedent was followed by his successors, who like him owned the archbishop of Canterbury for their metropolitan: and some writers have inferred from hence, that all the British bishops at the same time owned the superiority of the church of Rome; but this cannot be admitted. It is certain, the bishops of St. David's exercised the archiepiscopal functions in Wales, till the time of Henry I., and that without the ornament of the pall, the mark of submission to the pope.

Edmund, bishop of Durham, was remarkable for the manner of his election. The chapter of Durham having met to elect a bishop, and not being able to agree in their choice, Edmund, a priest of that church, said jestingly, that since they were at a loss whom to choose, they might as good select him and make him a bishop. As miracles were then much in vogue, the chapter looked upon this as a divine inspiration, and elected him. He afterwards proved worthy of the office to which he had been chosen in so singular a fashion: reprimanding vice even in the highest, and doing anything in his power for the encouragement of learning and virtue.

Of the division of the kingdom into parishes, we find that Augustin, the first Saxon bishop, received from the king of Kent certain lands for the maintenance of himself and the monks who accompanied him.

On receiving this gift, he consulted Pope Gregory I. as to how it ought to be disposed of. The reply was, that the church of Rome was accustomed to divide the revenues and offerings of the church into four portions, and devote one of them to the support of the inferior clergy; but as Augustin and his companions were monks, he recommended them to live together in community.

At first, there was but one such diocese; but as the number of converts increased, others were built, and the districts surrounding each gradually divided into parishes, slowly at first, the people not approving that the priests who officiated in them should have no share in the offerings and oblations which were reserved for the bishops.

This circumstance induced the prelates at last to abandon their claim to them to the hard-working, or inferior clergy; upon which the churches increased rapidly in England. The divisions of them, as they appear in the Doomsday-book, in the majority of instances, being the same as at the present day.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Saxon Architecture.

Few subjects in mediæval art have led to so much controversy as that of Saxon architecture; one party of writers claiming for it a place as a distinct and separate style, and another totally denying its very existence.

It was usual for writers on architecture before Rickman's time to denominate all buildings in which the semicircular arch or the zigzag moulding prevailed as "Saxon," no matter how highly finished or how richly carved they might be, and, consequently, all our fine Norman churches are in their works described as Saxon.

When this designation was proved to be incorrect, a reaction took place, and some of our writers went so far as to deny the existence of any building of a date anterior to the Conquest. It was argued by these writers that the Saxons built with wood only, and that, consequently, all their erections had long since perished; but though it is true there is evidence to show that the usual material for building was wood, and that it was sometimes overlaid with lead and other metals, yet we find, on the other hand, in the works of early writers, indubitable proofs to show that stone was also used, particularly in rebuilding the churches and monasteries which had been destroyed by the Danes. Alfred set aside a sixth part of his income for this purpose, and we are told by Asser that "he built the houses majestic and good, beyond all the precedents of his ancestors, by his new mechanical contrivances."

It was first pointed out by Rickman, in his valuable work, that there were a number of churches in different parts of the kingdom which could be proved to be of very early date, and which did not agree in character either with the Roman remains or with the earliest of the Norman churches; and that, in some instances, early Norman work had been built upon portions of these early buildings, thus affording conclusive evidence that these buildings must be of a prior date to that of the earliest Norman buildings.

Strong confirmatory evidence is also offered when we find it stated in a contemporary manuscript, that a church was built on a certain spot by some well known ecclesiastic at a stated time, and still find standing on this spot a building, or portions of a building, of a style which cannot be referred to that of any subsequent period. We are justified in considering this the building so mentioned; and when we find all these buildings agreeing in certain general features, we are also justified in considering these as constituting the style of the period.

Of this documentary evidence, the following are examples. The venerable Bede, who was born and resided at Jarrow, in Durham, and who died, A.D. 735, mentions the building of a monastery at that place by Benedict Biscopus, A.D. 687, and we now find standing on the spot a church, of which the chancel is of the rudest construction, and evidently of earlier date than the tower, which from its style cannot be much subsequent to the Conquest, and in which portions of the earlier building are built into the walls. The east window is of later date, but the side windows of the church (now blocked up) are of the rudest possible construction, round headed, with the heads formed of a single stone. These are undoubtedly the work of Benedict.

The church of Monk's Wearmouth is also mentioned by Bede as having been built by the same Benedict, A.D. 676.

This church still stands, and bears indubitable proofs of its early date. The windows are divided by balusters, and have other features peculiar to the period.

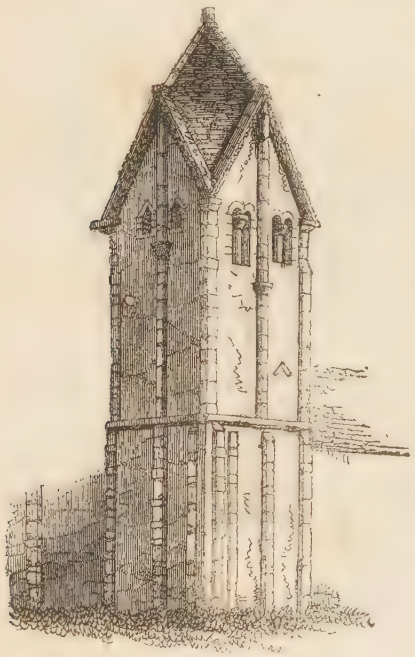
A convent existed at Repton, in Derbyshire, in the seventh century, and was in the year 875 destroyed by the Danes. The church was afterwards rebuilt, and such portions as were not destroyed were built into the new erection, and they may still be distinguished by the peculiarities of their style. The original crypt under the church still remains in a tolerably perfect state, and is a very remarkable specimen of the style.

There are also curious crypts of this date still remaining under the Cathedral of Ripon and at Hexham; the latter is particularly interesting from its having been constructed of materials taken from the Roman Wall which passes within a short distance of the place, and Roman inscribed slabs have been used in forming its roof.

In the Anglo-Saxon MSS. in the British Museum, the library of Salisbury Cathedral, and particularly the Paraphrase of Cædmon, in the Bodleian Library, at Oxford, buildings of stone are distinctly shown in the illuminations, and these buildings, moreover, exhibit "the long and short work" and other distinctive features of the existing remains. This, therefore, may be taken as strong and conclusive evidence that these buildings are of Saxon origin.

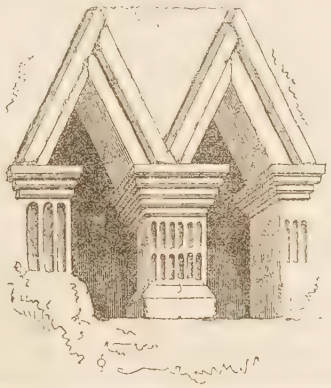
The characteristics of this style are as follows:—

Towers.—These are without buttresses, generally of the same dimensions from the foundation to the top, but sometimes diminishing by stages. They are generally built of rubble, the stones being very irregular in size, with quoins

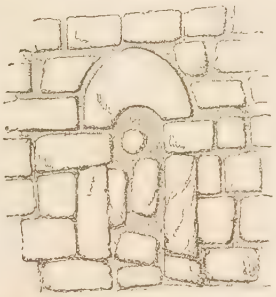


Tower of Sompting Church, Sussex.

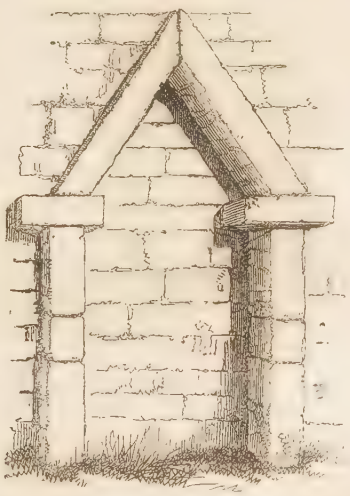
at the angles, which are formed of long stones set perpendicularly, and shorter ones laid horizontally alternately with them. (This is termed "long and short work.") They are sometimes divided into stages, and the surface intersected by upright projecting ribs of stone, as if the builder had before him for a model, a tower constructed of timber and plaster, and that he had endeavoured to imitate this in stone; the finest example which we have of this kind of ornament is the tower of Earl's Barton Church, Northamptonshire; other examples also occur at Barton-on-Humber, and at Barnack.



Window of Deerhurst Church, Gloucester.



Window of Jarrow Church, Durham.



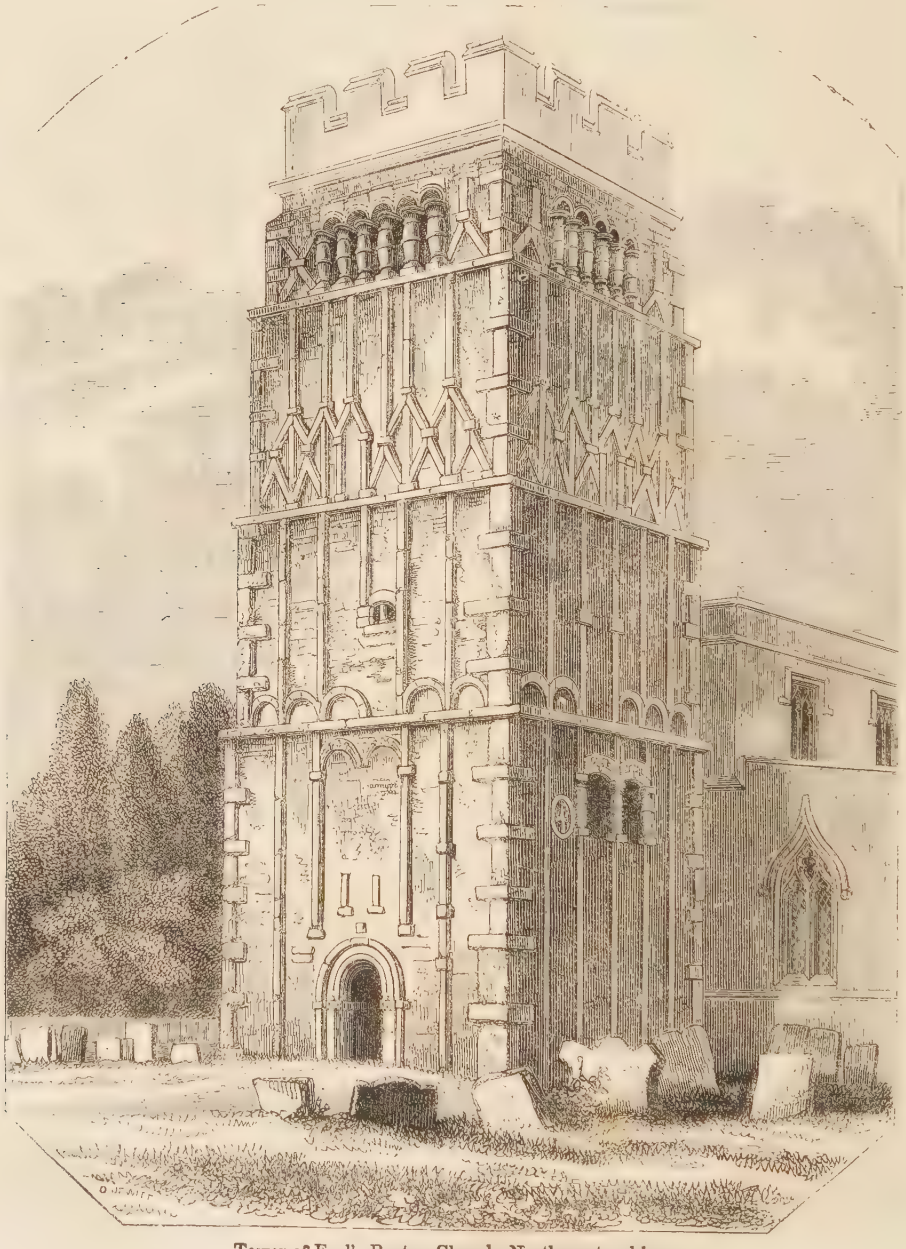
Doorway of Barnack Church, Northamptonshire.

These towers seem always to have been coated with plaster between the ribs of stone, and this gives them still more a timber-like appearance.

Some towers have not this ornament and are quite plain. The kind of masonry called "herringbone" is frequently used, and Roman bricks taken from the ruins of earlier buildings are of frequent occurrence.

The upper portion of these Saxon towers has been destroyed, and replaced by later parapets; so that it is not easy to say in what manner they terminated. But the very remarkable tower of Sompting, in Sussex, offers a valuable solution of the difficulty. In this tower each side terminates in an acutely pointed gable, from which the roof is carried up, and, meeting in a point, forms a sort of short square spire, such as we still see in some of the churches in Germany. All these towers are without staircases, the different stories being only to be reached by ladders. The circular or newel stair turret seems not to have been introduced till the twelfth century.

WINDOWS.—These are either round-headed or triangular-headed, and are frequently surrounded by a sort of frame-work of projecting stone. They are usually—but not always—deeply recessed on the outside as well as in the inside, the narrowest part of the window being in the centre of the wall. When the window is of two lights, it is divided by a small baluster, or shaft, set in the middle of the wall, this supports an impost, which is generally one stone reaching through the entire thickness of the wall.



Tower of Earl's Barton Church, Northamptonshire.

Sometimes the heads of both single and double light windows, instead of being arched, are formed of two straight stones meeting at the point, and forming a triangular head. The single lights are frequently little more than mere openings in the wall, frequently without ornament of any kind, the whole window being cut out of a single stone, as at Caversfield, and the jambs are often

inclined, making the opening wider at the bottom than at the top. Ornament is not often attempted, but at Deerhurst, the shaft and jambs are ornamented with a rude kind of fluting, and the imposts are cut into a series of simple square-edged mouldings. Roman bricks are sometimes used, both for the jambs, and for turning the arch, as at Brixworth. All these varieties of windows are very characteristic, and are not to be found in the later styles.

Doorways.—These, like the windows, are either round or triangular-headed. The arches are generally turned of plain stones without any moulding or ornament whatever; sometimes simple and sometimes recessed, but the projecting framework of plain stone is not unfrequent, as may be seen at Earl's Burton, Stanton Lacy, &c. The imposts are, in general, plain, but sometimes ornamented with a series of singular mouldings, generally square-edged and plain, as at Barnack, or with a kind of fluting, as at Earl's Barton. At Sompting, it is ornamented with a kind of scroll-work, though sculpture is seldom attempted. A cross is sometimes introduced above the door, as at Stanton Lacy, and it is remarkable that whenever the cross is used, it is of the Greek form, that is, with the limbs of equal length, in contradistinction to the Latin type, in which the lower member is the longest. The triangular heads of the doorways are formed either by two stones placed diagonally and resting one upon the other, or partly of horizontal stones cut obliquely. Both these varieties may be seen at Barnack. Doorways are also sometimes built of tiles, taken from Roman buildings, as at Brixworth.

Mouldings and Sculptures.—There are very few mouldings belonging to this style, the strings and other members being mostly square-edged and plain, though, as at Dunham Magna, they are sometimes alternately notched on the edges. The capitals and bases of the shafts and balusters which divide the windows are moulded chiefly with round and square moulding. The sculptures are few, and very rude, as at St. Bene't's, Cambridge, where two lions are sculptured at the spring of the tower arch.

Capitals.—The abacus seems in all cases to be a plain, square-edged, flat member, without chamfer (in which it differs from the Norman). The bell of the capital is either globular, as at Jarrow, or moulded, as before mentioned, or cut into a rude imitation of foliage, or of the Corinthian volute, as at Sompting.

It is curious to observe the evident imitation of Roman work in these capitals. The beautiful capital of the Corinthian order seems to have attracted the attention of the rude Saxon workmen, and their first attempt at sculpture seems to have been to copy it. Its delicate and complicated foliage was too difficult for his hand, but he could make an imitation—rude though it be—of its more prominent feature, the volute. This partiality for the volute was condemned in the next century, through the early and late Norman, until, in the transition to the early English, it produced those magnificent capitals of which we have a few examples in England, and so many on the continent.

It must not be expected that all these peculiarities will be found in one building; but wherever any of them occur, there is a reasonable presumption that the building is of early date, and is deserving of further investigation.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Of the Manners, Customs, and Laws of the Saxons.

Illustrations drawn from ancient calendars are among the best documents one can consult for obtaining a knowledge of former manners and customs. The twelve designs which follow, and which may conveniently serve as an introduction to an account of Saxon customs, are taken from an Anglo-Saxon calendar composed some time before the Norman Conquest, and preserved in the Cottonian Library. Some explanatory notes are added.

Anglo-Saxon Calendar.

January.—The heathen Saxons called this month "Wolf-month," because the wolves were then most ravenous. It was also called "Aefter-Yula," or after Christmas. In the cut, four oxen are laboriously drawing the plough. At that time they did not use horses for field labour; and oxen are used, even at the present day, in some localities.

February.—They are cutting down trees for firewood. The Saxons called February the "Cake-month," in allusion to the cakes which in this month they were in the habit of offering to their gods. The well-known custom of making pancakes on Shrove-Tuesday is a remnant of the old superstition, and certainly one of the most pleasing that has come down to us.

MARCH was dedicated by the Saxons to the goddess Rhoeda, and hence called "Rhed-monath." It was called also "Illyd-monath," or the stormy month. In the engraving they are digging, hoeing, and sowing with great ardour. After the introduction of Christianity, March was held in great reverence, as the month in which Lent began.

APRIL was the month of the goddess Eustre. The design in the engraving is very curious. It appears to represent three thanes celebrating the day by quaffing ale from their drinking-horns. On one side is an armed guard with a long spear, and on the other two attendants. The bench on which the three worthy thanes are seated is adorned with two sculptures of formidable-looking animals. The use of chairs or sofas was then entirely unknown. They called the benches placed in the festal halls "mede benc," or "eale benc"—mead or ale benches.

MAY was called "Trimilki," because then they began to milk the kine three times in the day. Shepherds are watching over the ewes and lambs. May-day was the great rural festival of the Anglo-Saxons, and was celebrated with great pomp and rejoicing. This festival will soon be numbered amongst the things that were.

JUNE.—To June different names were given. "Weyd-monath," according to some, "because then the cattle began to weyd (wade) through the meadows," which at that time were usually marshes. According to others it was called "Midsummer month." This was the time of the year at which the Saxons commenced their long voyages, and they are represented in the engraving in the act of cutting down and dressing trees, in order to fit out their ships.

JULY was called by the Saxons "Hen-monath," or foliage month; also "Hey-monath," or hay month, being the month in which they mowed and made hay, in which operations they are represented as being engaged in the engraving. They also called it "Lida-aftera," meaning the second lida, or second month after the sun's descent.

AUGUST was by the Saxons called "Arn-monath," or "Barn-monath," meaning harvest month. The instruments which appear in the engraving do not seem to differ much from those used at the present day. To the left appears a man sounding a horn, with a spear in his right hand. Whether he is superintending the labourers, or is one of a hunting party entering the field, it is hard to decide. The sheaves are being lifted by a fork into a cart, or wagon, of tolerably good construction.

SEPTEMBER was called "Gerst-monath"—barley month, so named from the liquor called "beerlegh" made in that month, and hence "barley." The subject of the engraving is a boar-hunt.

OCTOBER was called the "Cold-monath" or "Wyn-monath"—wine month. The vine was extensively cultivated in England at the time of the Saxons. The figures are represented as engaged in hawking.

NOVEMBER was called "Blod-monath," or blood month, as a great number of cattle were then killed for winter stores; or, according to some, as sacrifices to their deities. It was the custom to light great fires in the open air in honour of the gods, and as a means of driving away evil spirits. The men are here seen approaching one of these to warm themselves.

DECEMBER was called "Fust-monath," also "Winter-monath," or winter month; and after the introduction of Christianity, "Heilig-monath," or holy month. December was, among the Anglo-Saxons, above all things a month of festivity. Before the introduction of Christianity, Christmas was the feast of Thor, and the wassail bowl circulated as briskly in honour of the heathen god, as it has done since at the Christian festival. The figures are engaged in threshing the corn, winnowing it with a fan, and carrying it away.

The foregoing designs afford probably as good an idea as can now be obtained of the occupations and amusements of our Saxon forefathers, and of their daily life in time of peace.

With respect to the Anglo-Saxon form of government in its detail and working, the knowledge which has come down to us is very limited, and it is reasonable to suppose that the government of different states varied considerably and was changed from time to time during the six centuries of Anglo-Saxon rule.

It appears, however, that at all times, and in all the kingdoms, there was a national council, called a Wittenagemot, or assembly of the wise men, whose consent was requisite for enacting laws and for ratifying the chief acts of public administration. The preambles to all the laws of Ethelbert, Ina, Alfred, Edward the Elder, Athelstan, Edmund, Edgar, Ethelred, and Edward the Confessor, even those to the laws of Canute, though a conqueror, put this matter beyond controversy, and carry proofs everywhere of a limited and legal government. But who were the constituent members of this Wittenagemot has not been determined with certainty by antiquaries. It is agreed, that the bishops, abbots, and sometimes abbesses, were admitted—at least it is supposed so. It is well known that the latter frequently signed the royal charters. The former dignitaries, it is certain, formed a portion of the assembly. It also appears that the aldermen, or governors of counties, who were afterwards styled earls by the Danes, had seats in it. As much dispute has arisen respecting the importance of the office of alderman, it may be as well to examine the authorities upon the subject.

It appears from the ancient translations of the Saxon annals and laws, and from king Alfred's translation of Bede, as well as from all the ancient historians, that *comes* in Latin, *alderman* in Saxon, and *earl* in Dano-Saxon, were quite synonymous. There is only a clause in a law of king Athelstan's which has induced some antiquaries to suppose that an earl was superior to an alderman. The weregild, or the price of an earl's blood, is there fixed at 15,000 thrismas, equal to that of an archbishop; whereas, that of a bishop and alderman is only 8,000 thrismas. To solve this difficulty, we must have recourse to Selden's conjecture, that the term earl was in the age of Athelstan just beginning to be in use in England, and stood at that time for the atheling, or prince of the blood, heir to the crown. This he confirms by quoting a law of Canute, where an atheling and an archbishop are put upon the same footing. In another law of the same Athelstan, the weregild of the prince, or atheling, is said to be 15,000 thrismas. He is therefore the same who is called earl in the former law.

Men of superior rank, but still not powerful enough to insure their individual safety from the oppression and injustice of the nobles, entered into confederacies with each other for mutual support and protection.

By the laws of one of these societies, established in Cambridgeshire, the members mutually bound themselves to be faithful to each other; to bury any associate when he died; to give information to the sheriff if any one of them should be exposed to danger from a lawless attack; and if that officer neglected his duty, to levy a fine of a pound upon him.

When any one of them should be murdered, eight pounds was to be exacted from the assassin, who, if he refused to pay it, was to be prosecuted at the joint expense of the society.

If any of the members, who was a poor man, killed another, the society were to contribute, in a certain proportion, to pay his fine: a mark a-piece if the fine be 700 shillings; less if the person killed be a clown or ceorle; and the half of that sum again if he be a Welshman. But where any of the associates kills a man wilfully and without provocation, he

A Saxon Blacksmith.—From an old MS.

must himself pay the fine. If any of the associates kill any of his fellows in a like criminal manner, besides paying the usual fine to the relations of the deceased, he must pay eight pounds to the society, or renounce the benefit of it: in which case, they bind themselves, under the penalty of one pound, never to eat or drink with him, except in the presence of the king, bishop, or alderman. There were other regulations to protect themselves and their servants from all injuries, to revenge such as were committed, and to prevent their giving abusive language to each other; the fine which they engaged to pay for this last offence, was a measure of honey.

The Saxons, like the rest of the German nations, were divided into three classes, the noble, the free, and the slave; a distinction they maintained after they had settled in Britain.

The nobles were called thanes; and were of two kinds, the king's thanes and lesser thanes. The latter seem to have been dependent on the former; and to have received lands, for which they paid rent, services, or attendance in peace or war. We know of no title which raised any one to the rank of thane, except noble birth and the possession of land. The former was always much regarded by all the German nations.

There are two statutes, however, to be found amongst the Saxon laws which seem to confound these ranks. Athelstan decreed that the merchant who had made three long sea voyages on his own account should be entitled to the quality of thane, and that a husbandman who had bought five hides of land, and had a chapel, a kitchen, a hall, and a bell should enjoy the same rank.

The cities, according to the Doomsday-book, appear to have been little better than villages: York, the second in the kingdom, contained but 1418 families; Norwich had only 738 houses; Exeter, 315; Ipswich, 538; Northampton, 60; Hertford, 146; Canterbury, 262; Bath, 64; Southampton, 84; and Warwick, 225.

These appear to have been the most considerable; the account of them is extracted from the Doomsday-book.

William of Malmsbury tells us, that the great distinction between the Anglo-Saxon nobility, and the French or Normans, was, that the latter built magnificent and stately castles; whereas the former consumed their immense fortunes in riotous hospitality, and in mean houses. We may thence infer, that the arts in general were much less advanced in England than in France.

The lower ranks of freemen were the ceorles or husbandmen, employed in cultivating the farms of the nobles or thanes; for which they paid rent, chiefly in kind, and seem to have been removable at pleasure.

But by far the most numerous rank appears to have been the slaves, or villains, who were the absolute property of their lords, and incapable of possessing any kind of property. Of this last class there were two kinds amongst the Saxons; household slaves, and prædial, or labouring ones.

The power of the master over his slave, however, was not unlimited; for, if he beat his eyes or his teeth out, the latter might claim his liberty; and if he killed him, he paid a fine to the king, provided the slave died within a day after receiving his wound.

The great nobles and prelates held criminal jurisdiction upon their possessions, a circumstance which too frequently served as a protection to evil doers and robbers, rather than acted as a check upon them.

The punishments amongst the Anglo-Saxons appear to have been exceedingly mild for some offences, since even murder might be atoned for by the payment of a fine.

The laws of Alfred enjoin, that if any one know that his enemy or aggressor, after doing him an injury, resolves to

Saxon Bell.

keep within his own house and his own lands, he shall not fight him till he require compensation for the injury. If he be strong enough to besiege him in his house, he may do it for seven days without attacking him: and if the

aggressor be willing, during that time, to surrender himself and his arms, his adversary may detain him thirty days; but is afterwards obliged to restore him safe to his kindred, and be content with the compensation. If the criminal fly to the church, that sanctuary must not be violated. Where the assailant has not force sufficient to besiege the criminal in his house, he must apply to the alderman for assistance; and if the alderman refuse aid the assailant must have recourse to the king: and he is not allowed to assault the house, till after this supreme magistrate has refused assistance. If any one meet with his enemy, and be ignorant that he was resolved to keep within his own lands, he must, before he attack him, require him to surrender himself prisoner, and deliver up his arms; in which case he may detain him thirty days: but if he refuse to deliver up his arms, it is then lawful to fight him. A slave may fight in his master's quarrel, and a father in his son's, with any one except his master.

Ina enacted, that no man should take revenge till he had first demanded compensation, and it had been refused him.

King Edmund decreed, that if a man committed a murder, he may, within a year, pay the fine, with the assistance of his relatives and friends; but, if they refuse to aid him, he shall alone sustain the feud with the kindred of the murdered person.

The Execution of a Criminal.—From a Saxon MS.

There is indeed a law of Alfred's, which makes wilful murder capital; but this seems only to have been an attempt of that great legislator towards establishing a better police in the kingdom, and probably it was not often carried into execution. By the laws of the same prince, a conspiracy against the life of the king might be redeemed by a fine.

The price of the king's head, or his weregild, a word signifying the legal value of any one, was by law 30,000 thrismas, nearly 1,300 pounds of present money. The price of the prince's head was 15,000 thrismas; that of a bishop's, or alderman's, 8,000; a sheriff's, 4,000; a thane's,

A Saxon Calendar.

or clergyman's, 2,000; a ceorle's, 266. These prices were fixed by the laws of the Angles. By the Mercian law, the price of a ceorle's head was 200 shillings; that of a thane's, six times as much; that of a king's, six times

more. By the laws of Kent, the price of the archbishop's head was higher than that of the king's. Such respect was then paid to the ecclesiastics! It must be understood, that where a person was unable, or unwilling, to pay the fine, he was put out of the protection of the law, and the kindred of the deceased had liberty to punish him as they thought proper.

The price of all kinds of wounds was likewise fixed by the Saxon laws: a wound of an inch long under the hair, was paid with one shilling; one of a like size in the face two shillings; thirty shillings for the loss of an ear; and so forth. There seems not to have been any difference made, according to the dignity of the person. By the laws of Ethelbert, any one who committed adultery with his

At a Banquet given by Harold, he receives the News of the Invasion of the Normans.

neighbour's wife was obliged to pay him a fine, and buy him another wife.

In exceedingly difficult or doubtful cases, the judges had recourse to the trial by ordeal. One method, the decision by the cross, was practised in the following manner :—

When any one was accused of any crime, before he was allowed what was emphatically called the appeal to the judgment of God, he was compelled first to make oath of his innocence before the magistrates, and was attended by eleven friends, who, in some respects, were answerable for him; they were called compurgators.

He next took two pieces of wood, one of which was marked with the sign of the cross, and wrapping both up in wool, he placed them on the altar, or on some celebrated relic. After solemn prayers for the success of the experiment, a priest, or, in his stead, some inexperienced youth, took up one of the pieces of wood, and if he fixed upon that which was marked with the figure of a cross, the person was pronounced innocent; if otherwise, guilty. This practice, as it arose from superstition, was abolished by it in France. The Emperor Louis the Debonnaire prohibited that method of trial, not because it was uncertain, but lest that sacred figure, says he, of the cross, should be prostituted in common disputes and controversies.

The ordeal was another established method of trial among the Anglo-Saxons. It was practised either by boiling water or red hot iron. The former was appropriated to the common people; the latter to the nobility. The water, or iron, was consecrated by many prayers, masses, fastings, and exorcisms; after which the person accused either took up a stone sunk in the water to a certain depth, or carried the iron to a certain distance; and his hand being wrapped up, and the covering sealed for three days, if there appeared, on examining it, no marks of burning, he was pronounced innocent; if otherwise, guilty. The trial by cold water was different: the person was thrown into consecrated water; if he swam, he was guilty; if he sunk, innocent. It is difficult for us to conceive how any innocent person could ever escape by the one trial, or any criminal be convicted by the other. But there was another usage admirably calculated for allowing every criminal to escape who had confidence enough to try it. A consecrated cake, called a corsned, was produced; which if the person could swallow and digest, he was pronounced innocent.

From the general ignorance of the age, deeds and writings were exceedingly rare; and in order to obviate this inconvenience, the court of the hundred was the place where most civil transactions took place, in order to preserve the memory of them by having as many witnesses as possible. In the same courts slaves were manumitted, sales concluded, and sometimes, for greater security, a record of such transactions was inserted on the blank leaves of the bible.

The Saxons appear to have been exceedingly fond of dress. Ladies of rank wore necklaces, bracelets, and rings, set with precious stones. Mantles, kirtles, and gowns were also in general use; and rouge was not unknown to them.

In the men this taste for finery degenerated into effeminacy. They wore gold collars, and not unfrequently precious stones round the neck; and the wealthy wore costly bracelets and rings. They had silk, linen, and woollen garments: silk, from its costliness, was only used by the wealthy. The fashion of their garments of course varied. They had large mantles, which were ornamented with gold and gems; close coats or tunics, girded with a belt, which Strutt represents as having been put on over the head like a shirt. Many Englishmen are not aware that the smockfrock of the husbandmen of our own day is a pure piece of Saxon costume; and if it were well made, tightened with a broad belt, and worn by a man of good carriage, it would form a much handsomer dress than the unmeaning stiff-cut coats of our time. Socks and stockings, and other covering for the legs, are mentioned by their writers.

Their furniture was most probably heavy, rude, and ill-fashioned. Whatever invention of this kind they possessed was gained from the clergy, whose communication with Rome gave them the means of introducing many of the mechanical arts.

Saxon Game at Bowls.

Games and exercises of strength and agility were common among the Anglo-Saxons. St. Cuthbert is stated by Bede to have excelled in running, wrestling, and other athletic sports. Feats of juggling were performed by the gleemen, who were the most important characters in the festivals and other popular gatherings. Some of the gleemen seem to have performed tricks, gambols, and feats of all kinds, while others were harpers, or bards, and ballad-singers.

The indoor sports were various, and suitable to different ranks. The games of chess and backgammon were both known, or at least games very similar to them. Backgammon is said to have been invented in the tenth century.

Hangings for rooms, to supply the defects of their coarse carpentry, were amongst the first of their articles of furniture. Benches and stools with coverings are mentioned as their seats. These appear to have been much ornamented with devices of animals and flowers. Their tables were occasionally very costly, being sometimes of silver and gold, but generally of wood; they were sometimes inlaid with gold, silver, and gems. Candlesticks of various sorts were used, as also bells, both large and small. Mirrors of silver; beds and bed-hangings, and coverlets of bear and other skins.

Their naval architecture was of the simplest kind, their vessels being of small size, propelled with a single sail, assisted by oars.

The Saxons erected temples for the worship of their gods, but of what form or materials is not now known. The introduction of Christianity led immediately to the erection of churches, which at that period seem to have been built of timber. Some centuries later, under the reign of Edgar the Peaceable, architecture, as an art,

received a powerful impulse from the riches which had accumulated in monastic establishments, and which found employment in the erection of many monasteries, cathedrals, and other edifices.

Anglo-Saxon Vessel.

Gold and silver, of which our ancestors seem to have possessed a great deal, were used for cups and bowls and other utensils, and also to adorn their sword-hilts, saddles, bridles, and banners. Their gold rings contained gems; and even their garments, saddles, and bridles, were sometimes jewelled.

Spices were a great luxury, and came from India through Italy. Four ounces of cinnamon were sent from one church dignitary to another as a rare present.

The progress of the Anglo-Saxons in the art of painting, appears to have been very limited; but few specimens of their illuminated books, however, remain. In one of these there is a representation of the building of the Tower of Babel—out of all rule of perspective; the workmen being represented in the costume of the time in which the design was executed.

Of their jewel work we have scarcely any specimens of consequence. One found in the island of Athelney, supposed to have belonged to Alfred the Great, proves, however, that the art of engraving on metals had been carried to a certain degree of excellence amongst them.

Their arms consisted chiefly of the helmet, sword, spear, shield, and battle-axe; some of them singularly well designed.

CHAPTER XXV.

Accession of Harold—His brother Tosti—William of Normandy sends an Embassy.

When it is recollected how much England had endured from invasion and the government of foreign kings, it is little to be wondered that Harold's accession to the throne, for which he had so long prepared the way, was hailed with enthusiasm by the majority of the native nobles as well as the people. The city of London showed itself most zealous in his cause. The Saxon clergy, who recollected the intrusion of the Norman prelates into various sees at the commencement of the late king's reign, adopted his party; and the great nobility, most of whom were connected with him by blood, or friendship, gave him their support.

The title of Edward Atheling, who was the undoubted heir of the Saxon line, was passed over in silence, and the claims of the duke of Normandy treated with contempt. In an assembly which he had convened, Harold received the crown.

If any—and there were doubtless some, who objected to his reigning over England—felt aggrieved at his elevation, they carefully concealed their disaffection; and the new king was crowned by Aldred, archbishop of York, the very day after Edward the Confessor's decease.

The first danger which threatened the new government arose from the discontent of Tosti, who considered himself to have been unjustly treated by his brother, of whose accession he heard with feelings of rage and indignation. He complained loudly to the court of Flanders, where he was then residing, of the wrongs he had suffered, and endeavoured to arouse the anger of the count against Harold. Not content with this, he despatched messengers to Norway to engage the fierce and warlike people of that kingdom in his interests, pointed out the unsettled state of England in consequence of the new reign, and the wide field for plunder which it afforded. Had it been requisite to justify his having been deprived of his government and driven into exile, these last proceedings would have afforded the means of doing so.

With the restless ambition and thirst for vengeance which appear to have been the characteristics of this selfish noble, he made a journey into Normandy, in the hope of exciting his brother-in-law, William, who had married his wife's sister, both daughters of Baldwin, count of Flanders, against Harold; his object was to counsel him to undertake the invasion of England.

When William heard the news of Harold's accession, he gave way to the most violent indignation: but not having yet matured his designs, for the event had occurred unexpectedly, he sent an embassy to his rival, to reproach him for his perjury, and summon him instantly to resign the crown to him.

To this demand the new king replied, that the oath had been extorted from him by the dread of violence, and, for that reason, could not be regarded as binding upon his conscience; and added, that at the time he took it, he had no authority, either from his predecessor or the estates of the kingdom, who alone possessed the right of disposing of the crown, to make an offer of it to the duke of Normandy, who could not possibly possess any hereditary claims to it; he further argued, that if he, as a private person, had even sworn voluntarily to support their master's pretensions, the oath would have been an unlawful one, and that it would have been his duty to break it; that he had been raised to the throne by the voice of the people, and should hold himself a coward if he did not do his best to maintain the national liberties; and, if the duke of Normandy should attempt, by force of arms, to wrest the crown from him, he would experience the power of a mighty nation, headed by a prince who well knew the obligations imposed on him by his royal dignity, and who was resolved that the same moment should end his life and reign.

This was no other than the answer which William expected his ambassadors would bring him, and he at once set about making his preparations for a descent upon England; in which he was encouraged, not more by his own ambition, than the personal feelings of his wife, Matilda, whose love having been rejected by the English Earl of Gloucester, had caused her enmity to the entire nation.

William, consulting only his courage and ambition, overlooked all the difficulties inseparable from an attack on a great kingdom by such inferior force as his duchy could supply, and saw only the circumstances which would facilitate his enterprise. He considered that England, ever since the accession of Canute, had enjoyed profound tranquillity, during a period of nearly fifty years; and it would require time for its soldiers, enervated by long peace, to learn discipline, and its generals experience: he knew that it was entirely unprovided with fortified towns, by which his rival could prolong the war; but must venture its whole fortune in one decisive action against a veteran enemy, which, being once master of the field, would be in a condition to overrun the kingdom: he saw that Harold, though he had given proofs of vigour and bravery, had newly mounted a throne, which he had acquired by faction, from which he had excluded a very ancient royal family, and which was likely to totter under him by its own instability, much more if shaken by any violent external impulse; and he hoped, that the very circumstance of his crossing the sea, quitting his own country, and leaving himself no hopes of retreat, as it would astonish the enemy by the boldness of the enterprise, would impel his own soldiers, by a feeling of desperation, to unheard of feats of arms.

The Normans had long been distinguished for courage amongst all European nations. Besides the noble territory they had acquired in France, they had lately added to their possessions by remarkable successes in a distant part of Europe. A few Norman adventurers in Italy had vanquished, not only the Italians and Greeks, but the Germans and Saracens, and laid the foundation of the two kingdoms of Naples and Sicily.

The success of these men, most of them his vassals, increased the pride of William, who felt anxious to emulate their glory.

The enterprise was a gigantic one, and could not be undertaken without an immense outlay, far exceeding William's means. Before convoking the assembly of his states, he held a secret council with his immediate friends, amongst whom were Odo, bishop of Bayeux, and the Count de Mortain, his two half-brothers: with them were the son of Osbert, seneschal of Normandy, Robert, count d'Eu, Roger de Montgomery, Gautier Guiffort, count de Longueville, and Roger de Vielles, lord of Bellemont, who all promised to risk their lives and fortunes to assist him in his enterprise.

He was far from finding, however, the same disposition in the general assembly of the states. Many of the members of which, instead of voting the subsidies required, complained of the enormous imposts already levied. The deputies whom the states nominated to bear their answer to their sovereign, instanced that although they were his subjects, they were not bound to assist him in obtaining possession of the kingdom of a foreign prince who had inflicted no injury upon Normandy. They knew the character of William, and foresaw, if once they yielded to his demands, and followed him beyond sea, a precedent would be drawn for the future.

The duke dissimulated his anger and mortification, and had recourse to an expedient which proved his tact to have been equal to his courage. He sent for the principal members of the states individually, was prodigal of promises, and gradually won them over, none singly venturing on an opposition which they had not hesitated to offer collectively.

Neither did he neglect other means; he well knew the superstitious of the age would consider the oath which Harold had taken on the relics as doubly sacred. Had it been simply on the gospels, the breach of it might have been thought less of. He carried his cause to Rome, where the celebrated Lanfanc, who afterwards became archbishop of Canterbury, and Robert of Jumiège, whom Harold's father, Earl Godwin, had caused to be expelled from the primacy in England, pleaded his cause effectually, and ably sustained his pretensions in a consistory held at the Lateran, where it was finally decided that William of Normandy, being related to the late King Edward, and long reputed his heir, might with justice assume the title of king of England, and invade the kingdom.

Here it may not be amiss to notice the influences which led to this decision. The court of Rome, ever jealous of its authority, had witnessed with dissatisfaction the expulsion of the Norman archbishop from the see of Canterbury by the secular authority; and the elevation of Stigand in his place. The refusal of Harold to pay the tax known as Peter's pence, and the violation of his oath, were in the eyes of the consistory heinous crimes. The Saxon king had, moreover, shown great disrespect in not submitting his cause to their decision, as his rival had the prudence to do.

But the most powerful enemy of Harold in the councils of Pope Alexander II., in whose pontificate this celebrated cause was pleaded, was the celebrated monk Hildebrand, who afterwards, as Gregory VII., carried the papal power to such a height. He maintained that the Pontiff alone had the right to decide the question, and pronounce on all disputes touching the inheritance of the kingdoms of the world; a doctrine too palatable to be rejected, enforced as it was by all the fiery eloquence and influence of an enthusiast.

The solemn decision of Alexander II. was transmitted to the duke of Normandy in the form of a bull; the holy father, at the same time, sent him, in token of his paternal regard, a hair of St. Peter in a rich ring, and a banner, with the figure of the apostle, which was to guarantee him against defeat.

On receiving these welcome gifts, William at once proclaimed his appeal to arms, and promised to all who would join him a share in the spoils of the kingdom he had undertaken to conquer. French, Britons, Burgundians, and adventurers from almost every country in Europe flocked to his standard, allured by these tempting offers. Some had the modesty to demand a city, others a castle, as the price of their arms; and the duke appears to have been as extravagant in his promises as his new allies were in their expectations.

From all parts he gathered the immense material necessary for his enterprise; and assembled a great number of workmen to construct the vessels destined to carry himself and his army over: nothing was neglected which might contribute to his conquest: and, in order to secure his dominions during his absence, he so far subdued his pride as to remember the homage which he owed to the king of France, Philip I., and solicit aid, promising, that if he succeeded in his enterprise against England, he would hold it as a fief of the crown of France.

William was already too powerful a vassal, and his overtures were rejected from policy. Nothing daunted, he next addressed himself to his father-in-law, the count of Flanders, for assistance. Baldwin listened to him, and helped him to the utmost of his power.

In the midst of these warlike preparations, the duke of Normandy received a message from Conan II., duke of Brittany, demanding that he should resign his states to him, as the legitimate heir of Rollo. Conan died shortly afterwards by poison; and his successor, with far more prudence, not only abandoned the claim, but sent his two sons with troops and offers of service to William.

Whether guilty or not, William was accused of the murder of Conan. Guillaume de Jumiège asserts, that one of his chamberlains, bribed by the duke of Normandy, rubbed a subtle poison on the hunting horn of the unfortunate prince, on the reins of his horse, and on his gloves; and that Conan, after having worn the latter, raised his hands to his lips, and died shortly afterwards.

In the middle of August, 1066, the duke of Normandy had collected and built upwards of nine hundred large vessels, without counting those destined to serve as means of transport, and counted under his command 50,000 horsemen and 10,000 foot soldiers, of various nations: he named, as general rendezvous, the mouth of the Dive, where his fleet had for some time been detained by unfavourable weather.

The unfortunate Harold saw himself menaced by the danger of a double invasion—one from William, and the other from the king of Norway. A third enemy threatened his repose, in the person of his own brother, Tosti, who, impatient to avenge his real or fancied injuries, could not wait the arrival of the Norwegian fleet; but gathering an army and sixty vessels in the ports of Flanders, set sail, and attempted to effect a landing in the south of England. Driven back by Saxon ships, he directed his forces to the Humber, where he was defeated by Earl Edwin, who obliged him to retreat.

Tosti took refuge in Scotland, after escaping with only twelve of his vessels, there to await the arrival of his ally, the king of Norway, who made his appearance off the English coast early in August, 1066, with a fleet of three hundred sail, and a formidable army.

Tosti joined him with the wreck of his armament; and they sailed up the Humber, took Scarborough, and then directed their march upon York, the capital of the province of Northumbria.

Morcar and his brother Edwin hastened to the defence; but being defeated were obliged to shut themselves within the walls of the city, which the Norwegians immediately besieged. Negotiations were opened, and a day named for delivering York to the enemy.

Harold, who was engaged in watching the movements of William in the western part of the kingdom, no sooner heard of the arrival of his brother and the Norwegians, than he marched rapidly towards the north with all his forces.

The king of Norway, who had divided his army, leaving a portion of it under the command of his son Olave, was advancing with the other to take possession of York, when he suddenly perceived, near Stamford bridge, the approach of the Saxons, who, by a long and forced march, were hastening to relieve the city.

The Norwegians were taken by surprise by their adversaries. Hadrada, their king, sent to his son for succour, and proceeded to range his soldiers in line of battle: then riding along the ranks, mounted upon his black charger, he animated his men by singing their national war-songs.

Anxious as Harold must have felt from being threatened by two enemies, he showed no unmanly fear. It is true he made offers to his brother, in an interview which took place between them, of restoring him to all his honours and possessions, if he would lay down his arms, which Tosti at first seemed disposed to do.

"And what will you give my ally the king of Norway?" demanded the traitor.

"Six feet of earth," was the courageous reply of Harold; "or stay," he added, with a bitter smile, "as Hadrada is a giant, he shall have seven."

This answer broke off all further negotiation, and the signal for battle was given.

The Norwegians received, without giving way, the first shock of the Saxon cavalry; but the second shook their ranks. At this critical juncture, Hadrada, their king, fell from his horse, his neck pierced by an arrow; which his army perceiving, they were about to give way, when his son Olave arrived with fresh troops. Once more the battle raged furiously; but nothing could resist the determined valour of the Saxons, who, led by their king, charged them with terrible impetuosity. Tosti and the principal leaders were slain, and the victory remained with Harold.

The conqueror showed himself no less humane than brave. Instead of putting the young Norwegian, prince Olave, who had fallen into his power, to death, he gave him his liberty, and suffered him to depart, with twelve vessels, for his native country, where he afterwards reigned in conjunction with his brother Magnus.

William of Malmsbury relates, that Harold offended a portion of his army by refusing them their share of the plunder; and that many, in consequence, abandoned his standard. If so, the error was bitterly expiated.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Landing of the Normans—the Battle of Hastings—Death of Harold—and Accession of William.

IMMEDIATELY after his victory, Harold directed his march to York, which city he entered in triumph, being hailed by the inhabitants as their deliverer from an enemy whom they had so many causes both to fear and hate. Here the king intended to remain for some time, not only to recruit his army, but to give himself an opportunity of getting cured of a wound he had received in the late battle.

The joy of victory was destined, however, to receive a speedy check, for whilst Harold was at a banquet with his thanes and captains, a messenger arrived with the intelligence that the Normans had landed on the coast near Hastings. The king, nothing daunted, gave orders for his march at an early hour the following day.

The Norman fleet had been assembled, as we have already related, early in the summer at the mouth of the river Dive, and all the troops embarked; but the winds proved long contrary, and detained them in that harbour. The authority, however, of the duke, the good discipline maintained among the seamen and soldiers, and the great care in supplying them with provisions, had prevented any

disorder. At last the wind became favourable, and enabled them to sail along the coast, till they reached St. Valari. There were, however, several vessels lost in this short passage; and, as the wind again proved contrary, the army began to imagine that Heaven had declared against them, and that, notwithstanding the pope's benediction, they were destined to certain destruction. These bold warriors, who despised real dangers, were very subject to the dread of imaginary ones; and many of them began to mutiny, some of them even to desert their colours; when the duke, in order to support their drooping hopes, ordered a procession to be made with the relics of St. Valari, and prayers to be said for more favourable weather. The wind instantly changed; and as this incident happened on the eve of the feast of St. Michael, the tutelar saint of Normandy, the soldiers, fancying they saw the hand of Heaven in all these concurring circumstances, set out with the greatest alacrity. They met with no opposition on their passage: a great fleet, which Harold had assembled, and which had cruised all summer off the Isle of Wight, had been dismissed on his receiving false intelligence that William, discouraged by contrary winds and other accidents, had laid aside his preparations. The Norman armament, proceeding in great order, arrived, without any material loss, at Pevensey, in Sussex; and the army quietly disembarked. The duke himself, as he leaped on shore, happened to stumble and fall; but had the presence of mind, it is said, to turn the omen to his advantage, by declaring aloud that he had taken possession of the country; and a soldier, running to a neighbouring cottage, plucked a handful of thatch and brought it to his leader.

"What is this?" demanded William, for the moment not comprehending the meaning of the man. "Seizin," was the reply.

It was received with a loud shout by the army; seizin being the act by which, according to the feudal laws, a tenant paid homage to his sovereign for his fief.

Ruins of Hastings Castle.

The joy and alacrity of the duke and his soldiers were so great, that even the intelligence of Harold's victory over the Norwegians, and the death of Tosti, did not dismay them; they seemed rather to entertain greater confidence in a speedy conquest.

The victory of Harold, though great and honourable, had proved in the main prejudicial to his interests, and may be regarded as the immediate cause of his ruin. He lost many of his bravest officers and soldiers in the action; and he disgusted the rest by refusing to distribute the Norwegian spoils among them;—a conduct which was little agreeable to his usual generosity of temper, but which his desire of sparing the people, in the war that impended over him from

the duke of Normandy, had probably occasioned. He hastened, by quick marches, to reach this new invader; but though he was reinforced at London and other places with fresh troops, he found himself also weakened by the desertion of his old soldiers, who, from fatigue and discontent, secretly withdrew from their colours. His brother Gurth, a man of bravery and conduct, began to entertain apprehensions of the event; and remonstrated with the king, that

The Battle of Hastings.

it would be better policy to prolong the war; at least, to spare his own person in the action. He urged to him, that the desperate situation of the duke of Normandy made it requisite for that prince to bring matters to a speedy decision, and put his whole fortune on the issue of a battle, but that the king of England, in his own country, beloved by his subjects, provided with every supply, had more certain and less dangerous means of ensuring to himself the victory: that the Norman troops, elated on the one hand with the highest hopes, and seeing, on the other, no resource in case of a discomfiture, would fight to the last extremity; and, being the flower of all the warriors on the continent, must be regarded as formidable to the English: that if their first charge, which is always the most dangerous, were allowed to languish for want of action; if they were harassed with small skirmishes, straitened in provisions, and fatigued with the bad weather and deep roads during the winter season, which was approaching,—they must fall an easy and a bloodless prey to their enemy: that if a general action were delayed, the English, sensible of the imminent danger to which their properties, as well as liberties, were exposed from those rapacious invaders, would hasten from all quarters to his assistance, and would render his army invincible: that at least, if he

thought it necessary to hazard a battle, he ought not to expose his own person, but reserve, in case of disastrous accidents, some resource to the liberty and independence of the kingdom; and that having once sworn upon the holy relics to support the pretensions of the duke of Normandy, it was better that the command of the army should be entrusted to another, who not being foresworn might rely with greater confidence upon obtaining a glorious victory.

To these remonstrances, Harold, flushed with the pride of recent victory, and listening only to his natural courage, turned a decided refusal. He was resolved, he said, to show to the nation who had elected him, that he was worthy of their choice, and knew how to defend the crown he had won.

With this intention he gave orders to advance to meet the Normans, who by this time had removed their camp to Hastings, where they had erected fortifications.

So confident did the English monarch feel of success, that he sent a messenger to William, offering him a sum of money to quit the kingdom; not that, he said, he feared him, or aught that he and his army could do; but simply to avoid the effusion of blood, and spare the lives of their followers on either side. The offer was rejected with disdain. The duke of Normandy possessed a courage as ardent, and an ambition equal to his own; added to which he was further excited by the personal hatred he bore to Harold, whose oath to assist William to the English throne and marry his daughter, had been broken on both points.

Not to appear behind hand with his enemy in boasting, William despatched a counter proposition by a monk of Fescamp, named Hugues Margot, whose office secured him against any violence at the hands of the incensed Saxons. He haughtily called upon Harold either to resign his crown, hold it in fealty to him, submit their difference to the arbitration of the pope, or decide their claims in single combat.

To this, Harold replied that the God of battles would soon decide between them.

Both parties now prepared for the contest which was to decide the possession of the kingdom; and the manner in which the night preceding the battle was passed, in either camp, illustrated the character of the two nations. The Saxons spent the hours in rioting and feasting, song and wassail; the Normans in silence and prayer.

On the morning of the 14th of October, the duke of Normandy called to his tent the principal leaders and officers of his army, and addressed to them a discourse suited to the occasion.

He represented to them that the event which they and he had so long looked forward to was at hand, and that the fortune of the war now hung upon their swords; that a single action in all probability would decide it; that never army had greater motives for exerting a vigorous courage, whether they considered the prize that would attend their victory, or the inevitable destruction which must ensue in the event of their being discomfited; that if their veteran bands could once break the lines of the raw soldiers who had rashly dared to approach them, they could conquer a kingdom at one blow, and be justly entitled to the possession of it as the reward of their valour.

On the contrary, he pointed out the result in the event of a defeat,—an enraged and merciless enemy in their rear, the sea to bar their retreat, and an ignominious death as the reward of their cowardice. "By collecting so numerous and brave a host," he added, "I have done all that is possible, humanly speaking, to ensure conquest; and the sacrilegious conduct of Harold in breaking his oath to me, gives me just reason to believe that Heaven, and the saints who are witnesses to his perjury, will smile upon my endeavours."

This address was received with loud cheers; the duke commanded the signal to be given, and the entire army advanced, singing, according to William of Malmesbury, the war song, or hymn of Roland.

Harold, in the meanwhile, had not been idle, but had taken advantage of some rising ground to post his army, and dug trenches to secure his plans; it being his intention to stand on the defensive, and avoid, if possible, all action with the enemy's cavalry, to which his own was inferior. The Kentish men he placed in the van—a post they claimed as their right: the citizens of London guarded the standard: whilst the king himself, accompanied by his two valiant brothers, Gurth and Leofwin, dismounting, placed himself at the head of the infantry, and expressed his resolution to conquer or to perish in the action. The first attack of the Normans was desperate, but was received with equal firmness by the English; and after a furious combat, the assailants, overcome by the difficulty of the ground, and hard pressed by the enemy, began first to relax their vigour, then to retreat; and confusion was spreading among the ranks, when William, who found himself on the brink of destruction, hastened with a select band to the relief of his dismayed forces. His presence revived their courage; the English were obliged to retire with loss; and the duke, ordering his second line to advance, renewed the attack with fresh forces and with redoubled vigour. Finding that the enemy, aided by the advantage of ground, and animated by the example of their prince, still made an obstinate resistance, he tried a stratagem, which was very delicate in its management, but which seemed advisable in his desperate situation, where, if he gained not a decisive victory, he was totally undone. He commanded his troops to make a hasty retreat, and to allure the enemy from their ground by the appearance of flight. The artifice succeeded; and the English, heated by the action, and sanguine in their hopes of victory, followed the Normans into the plain. William gave orders that at once the infantry should face about on their pursuers, and the cavalry make an assault on their wings; and both of them pursue the advantage, which the surprise and terror of the enemy must give them in that critical moment. The English were repulsed with great slaughter, and driven back to the hill; where, being rallied by the bravery of Harold, they were able, notwithstanding their loss, to maintain their ground and continue the combat. The duke tried the same stratagem a second time with the same success; but even after this double advantage, he still found a great body of the English, who maintaining themselves in firm array, determined to dispute the battle to the last extremity. He ordered his heavy-armed infantry to make an assault on them; while his archers, placed behind, should gall those who were exposed by the situation of the ground, or who were intent on defending themselves against the swords and spears of the assailants. By this disposition he at last prevailed: Harold was slain by an arrow, while he was

combating with great bravery at the head of his men, and his two brothers shared his fate.

The English, dismayed by the fall of their king, and having no one to lead them, gave way, and were pursued by the victorious Normans with great slaughter, till night put an end to the horrors of the scene.

Thus did William of Normandy gain the great and decisive battle of Hastings, which lasted from sunrise to sunset; and which, from the valour displayed by both armies, and their leaders, was worthy to decide the contest for a crown. William, in the course of the battle, had three horses killed under him, and lost nearly fifteen thousand of his followers. The loss of the English was never exactly known, but it must have been even more considerable.

The darkness of the night, however, saved a good part

The Norman Thanksgiving after the Battle of Hastings.

of the English army, who retreated under the conduct of Morcar and Edwin. These two thanes, who had firmly adhered to Harold, seeing he was slain, as well as Gurth and Leofwin, his brothers, submitted at length to circumstances, and retreated, having given undoubted proofs of valour during the day.

William, at the height of his wishes, gave orders for the whole army to fall on their knees, and return God thanks for so signal a victory. After which, he caused his tent to be pitched in the field of battle, and spent the residue of the night among the slain. Nor less perhaps in gratitude for the past, than in the hope that such a work would procure him heavenly favour for the future, he solemnly vowed that he would erect a splendid abbey on the scene of this his first victory; and when this vow was accomplished, the altar of the abbey church stood on the spot where the standard of Harold had been planted. The holy house thus founded was called Battle Abbey (see page 96).

On the morrow, he ordered his own dead to be buried, and gave the English peasants leave to do the same office for the others; and the bodies of the king and his brothers being found, he sent them to Githa, their mother, who gave them as honourable a burial as the circumstances of the time would permit, in Waltham Abbey, founded by Harold before he was king.

Most of the English historians say that the body was given to his mother without ransom. An ancient manuscript in the Cottonian library, apparently written at Waltham Abbey about a hundred years after the battle, relates that two monks were deputed by William to search for the body of the king. Unable to distinguish it among the nameless dead by which it was surrounded, they sent for Harold's mistress, Editha, called "the swan-necked," whose eye of affection was not to be deceived.

There is a story related by Giraldus Cambrensis, that Harold, after receiving his wound, escaped from the field and lived several years an anchorite in a cell near St. John's Church, in Chester. This account is, however, in the highest degree improbable, and there is no reason to doubt that the last of the Saxon kings died a soldier's death on the field of Hastings.

CHAPTER XXVII.

William I., Surnamed the Conqueror.

Great as were the disasters of Hastings, the English were still in a position to offer a powerful resistance, had they been united and firm; the population of London took up arms, and were still further strengthened by the arrival of the earls Edwin and Morcar within their walls, with the remains of the routed army. An assembly of the nobles was convened; in which, as the brothers of Harold were both slain, and his sons too young to govern, Edgar Atheling, the grand-nephew of Edward the Confessor, the only descendant of Cerdic, was proclaimed king, chiefly through the influence of the primate Stigand, and Aldred, the archbishop of York.

Although dear to the people, on account of his birth, Edgar possessed no one quality necessary for the crisis which menaced his kingdom. So weak was his character, that it would have been difficult for him, under the most favourable circumstances, to have maintained himself upon the throne; and he was totally unfitted to cope with an adversary, who was not only the most warlike, but one of the ablest princes of his time.

William remained for some days quietly at Hastings after his victory, not doubting but the terrified inhabitants of London would send a deputation to his camp with offers of submission. Some writers have contended that he was detained by a violent dissension which broke out amongst the soldiers. This inactivity, however, was but of short duration; finding that no one came to him with offers from the English, and learning that several vessels which his wife, Matilda, had sent to him with reinforcements from Normandy, had been attacked and driven from the coast at Romney, the duke felt that it was time to act, but tempered his ardour with prudence.

His first care was to assure his communications with the continent, and establish a post to which he could retreat in case of a reverse: with this intention, he followed with his army the line of coast between Hastings and Dover, stopping by the way at Romney, which he pillaged and burnt.

The garrison of Dover Castle, a fortress at that time deemed impregnable, yielded without a blow, vanquished by the terror of his name; and was replaced by a force of Normans. Here William remained till he received fresh troops and supplies from Normandy; after which, he advanced with the flower of his army to London.

Finding the approaches to the city well defended, the Conqueror made no attempt to carry it by assault, but dispersed his troops in the neighbourhood, with orders to burn and plunder the villages, and to intercept all supplies to the capital. The two earls Morcar and Edwin, refusing to yield obedience to the phantom of a king, which the ambitious prelates, who hoped to govern in his name, had caused to be elected, had retired to their respective governments. After their departure the military authority fell into the hands of Ansgar, who filled the office of esquire to the new king. Although deprived of the use of his limbs, he caused himself to be borne on his litter to every point of the city, examined the defences, and exercised the utmost vigilance and zeal for the general safety.

William, who had his spies within the walls, was soon aware of the credit of Ansgar with the people and his influence in the council of the nation, and sent a messenger to him, with secret offers, to bribe him to the Norman interests.

"My master," said the emissary, "merely demands the title of king—he will leave you to govern the kingdom in his name."

Ansgar neither accepted nor rejected these advances, but kept them a secret from the council, whom he persuaded to send an envoy to the duke to sound his intentions.

No prince of his day equalled William either in ability or dissimulation; he quickly penetrated the designs of the messenger, whom he seduced, by magnificent promises and protestations.

On his return to the council, the envoy kept his promise to plead the cause of the duke.

William, he proclaimed aloud, had not his equal, either in wisdom or courage, amongst the princes of the age; "in the first, he exceeds Solomon; and in the latter, Charlemagne: he demands your suffrages, that you confirm the

donation of the kingdom made to him by Edward. The general safety depends upon submission."

These words, by which the duke of Normandy let it be understood that he would rather hold the crown by the legitimate title of a general consent than by the right of conquest, were not without the effect he anticipated, both on the nobles and people, who unanimously withdrew their allegiance from the feeble Edgar, and resolved to take the oath of fidelity to a new sovereign in the camp of the Normans.

William the Conqueror.

The primate Stigand was the first who went over to William, whom he encountered at Wallingford, and who received him with hollow marks of affection and respect, addressing him by the titles of archbishop and father in exchange for those of king and son.

The example of Stigand was quickly followed by his brother of York, and the principal nobles and prelates who had assembled in London.

The degenerate Edgar Atheling himself came and resigned the crown he had so lately received into the hands of the Conqueror.

William received it with affected modesty, invited the barons to express their wishes, and, in finally ascending the throne, made it appear that he did so in obedience to their desire.

Christmas-day was the one fixed for the coronation of the new king, and the church of Westminster the place appointed; but before trusting himself within the walls of London, the wily Norman caused several of the strongest entrenchments to be destroyed; and commenced strengthening, if he did not lay the foundation of the fortress which has since grown into the Tower of London.

William decided on receiving the crown from the hands of Aldred, archbishop of York; and that the ceremony should take place with the same formalities which marked the accession of the Saxon kings.

A serious tumult took place during the ceremony. When the archbishop demanded of the assembled nobles whether they would have William for their king, the reply was given with acclamations so loud as to startle the Norman soldiers stationed outside the church. Supposing that an attack was being made upon their duke, the troops rushed to the English houses adjoining the abbey, and set them on fire.

Both Norman and Saxon nobles rushed from the sacred edifice, leaving their new sovereign, and a few church-

men, alone within the walls. Recovering his self-possession, William commanded that the ceremony should be concluded; and in the midst of the cries of his new subjects, who were being massacred on all sides, the flames of the burning houses, the pillage and devastation, he took the oath to govern according to the laws of the kings his predecessors.

Directly after his coronation, William, not deeming himself in perfect safety in London, whose inhabitants bitterly resented the outrage they had been subjected to, removed to Barking, where he received the homage of many of the great nobility, churchmen, and thanes.

His justice, he punished with rigour various acts of outrage that had been committed.

He introduced into England that strict execution of justice for which his administration had been much celebrated in Normandy; and even during this violent revolution, disorder and oppression met with rigorous punishment. His army, in particular, was governed with severe discipline; and, notwithstanding the insolence of victory, care was taken to give as little offence as possible to the jealousy of the vanquished. The king appeared solicitous to unite, in an amicable manner, the Normans and the English by intermarriages and alliances; and all his new subjects

Finding of the Body of Harold.

The conduct of William at this period appears to have been most prudent; he respected the rights of his new subjects and the laws of property, though it was impossible for him to restrain the rapacious disposition of his followers. The treasures of Harold and the donations of the nobility, which were supposed to be voluntary, furnished the first largess which he distributed amongst his companions in arms.

He granted at least nominal privileges to the citizens of London, in the hope of reconciling them to his government; and took strong measures to secure the future tranquillity of the capital.

It is true, that he disarmed the inhabitants, but at the same time, in order to establish a favourable impression of

who approached his person were received with affability and apparent regard. No signs of suspicion appeared, not even towards Edgar Atheling, the heir of the ancient royal family, whom William confirmed in the honours of earl of Oxford, conferred on him by Harold, and whom he affected to treat with the highest kindness, as nephew to the Confessor, his great friend and benefactor. Though he confiscated the estates of Harold, and of those who had fought in the battle of Hastings on the side of that prince, whom he represented as a usurper, he seemed willing to admit of every plausible excuse for past opposition to his pretensions, and he received many into favour who had carried arms against him.

William set sail from England in the month of May,

1067, to return to Normandy, accompanied by the most considerable nobility of England, who, while they served to grace his court by their presence and magnificent retinues, were in reality hostages for the fidelity of the nation. Among these were Edgar Atheling, Stigand the primate, the earls Edwin and Morcar, Waltheof, the son of the brave earl Siward, with others eminent for the greatness of their fortunes and families, or for their ecclesiastical and civil dignities. He was visited at the abbey of Fescamp, where he resided during some time, by Rodulph, uncle to the king of France, and by many powerful princes and nobles, who, having taken part in his enterprise, were desirous of participating in the joy and advantages of its success. His English courtiers, willing to ingratiate themselves with their new sovereign, outvied each other in equipages and entertainments; and made a display of riches which struck the foreigners with astonishment. William of Poictiers, a Norman historian, who was present, speaks with admiration of the beauty of their persons, the size and workmanship of their silver plate, the costliness of their embroideries, an art in which the English women then excelled; and he expresses himself in such terms as tend much to exalt our idea of the opulence and cultivation of the people. But though everything bore the face of joy and festivity, and William himself treated his new courtiers with great appearance of kindness, it was impossible altogether to prevent the insolence of the Normans; and the English nobles derived little satisfaction from those entertainments, where they considered themselves as led in triumph by their ostentatious conqueror.

The Coronation of William the Conqueror.

During his absence, William had entrusted the government of his newly acquired country to his half-brother Odo, bishop of Bayeux, and to William Fitz-Osborn, one of his Norman vassals. The affection of the king had elevated Odo at a very early age to the see of Bayeux, where he displayed great ability, not only in the administration of the affairs of his diocese, but in the councils of his sovereign.

In obedience to the canon of the church, which strictly forbids the shedding of blood by a priest, he never carried arms, although he constantly attended his brother in all his battles, assisting him with his advice and resources, which were large.

He was, says a contemporary historian, "a prelate of such rare and noble qualities, that the English, barbarians as they were, could not but admire him."

To Odo had been assigned the government of Kent, the remainder of the kingdom being committed to the care of Fitz-Osborn, who was also related to William by his mother's side. This noble appears to have been the steadfast friend of the Conqueror, whom he invariably supported in his disputes with his own turbulent Norman subjects, and to his influence was attributed the resolution of William to make good his claims to the crown of England by the invasion of the country.

Fitz-Osborn was looked upon by the Normans as one of the greatest warriors of the age; by the oppressed and suffering Saxons as the powerful instrument of the Conqueror in oppressing their unhappy country, which he ruled with a rod of iron.

Discontents and complaints multiplied rapidly during the absence of William, and secret conspiracies were entered into against the government. The Norman historians throw the blame of these proceedings on the fickle, turbulent spirit of the English, who, doubtless, when they began to recover from their panic and surprise, felt ashamed of having yielded so tamely to the enemy.

On the other hand, it is probable that William, compelled to satisfy the thirst of his followers for plunder, did not hesitate secretly to instigate the English to conspiracies which he knew could easily be quenched, and which afforded him a pretext for depriving the people of their possessions.

The inhabitants of Kent, who had been the first to acknowledge him, were also the first to attempt to shake off the yoke, and, assisted by Eustace, count of Boulogne, endeavoured to surprise the castle of Dover, but failed.

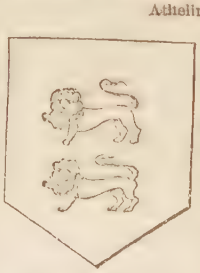
Edric the Forester, being pressed by the ravages committed by the Normans on his lands, entered into an alliance with two Welsh princes, Blethyn and Rowallan, to repel force by force. A secret conspiracy was gradually formed throughout England to get rid of the Normans by a general massacre, like that perpetrated on the Danes. So strong were the feelings of the Saxons, that the vassals of Earl Coxo, on the refusal of that noble to lead them against the invaders, put him to death as a traitor to his country.

The king, informed of these proceedings, hastened over to England, and by his sudden appearance disconcerted the machinations of his new subjects; it was no part of his policy to let the insurrection make any head, all he required being a pretext for the plans he meditated. Those who were most compromised in these transactions betrayed their fears by flight, and William confiscated their estates, which he bestowed upon his Norman followers. He still affected an outward show and love of justice, by commanding that the possessions which during his absence had been taken from the English should be restored to them, but at the same time he imposed a heavy tax upon the people, that of Danegelt, which had been abolished by Edward the Confessor, and which had ever been regarded with peculiar aversion by the nation.

The inhabitants of Exeter, instigated by Githa, or Editha, mother to king Harold, refused to admit a Norman garrison; and, betaking themselves to arms, were strengthened by the assistance of the neighbouring inhabitants of Devonshire and Cornwall. The king hastened with his forces to chastise this revolt; and, on his approach, the wiser and more considerable citizens, sensible of the unequal contest, persuaded the people to submit, and to deliver hostages for their obedience. A sudden mutiny of the populace broke this agreement; and William, appearing before the walls, ordered the eyes of one of the hostages to be put out, as an earnest of the severity which the rebels must expect if they persevered in their revolt. The inhabitants, undaunted by this savage act, refused to surrender, and sustained the attack of the king's forces for eighteen days, during which the besiegers suffered heavy loss. When the city at length was taken, the brave men of Exeter obtained terms by which their lives and property were secured to them. William was not destitute of generosity, when his temper was not hardened either by policy or passion: he set guards on all the gates, in order to prevent the rapacity and insolence of his soldiery. Githa escaped with her treasures to Flanders; and the king, having built a citadel in the city of Exeter, which he put under the command of Baldwin, son of earl Gilbert, returned to Winchester, and dispersed his army into their quarters. He was here joined by his wife, Matilda, who had not before visited England, and whom he now ordered to be crowned by archbishop Aldred. This ceremony, which was contrary to an old law of the Anglo-Saxons, displeased the people, who were further incensed against the new queen in consequence of large tracts of confiscated territory being assigned to her.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Conspiracy against the Normans—Its Consequences—Escape of Edgar Atheling with his Sisters to Scotland.

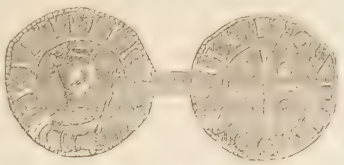


Arms of William the Conqueror.

Although fortune appeared to lavish her smiles upon the Conqueror, bitter discontent was brooding in the hearts of the English, who saw themselves stripped one by one of their liberties and privileges, and whenever they met with the Normans in small parties the people set on them and slew them without mercy.

An insurrection at last broke out in the north of England, headed by the earls Morcar and Edwin, who bitterly regretted their short-sighted policy in not supporting Edgar Atheling on the throne. Before appealing to arms, these powerful nobles had secured the assistance of their nephew Blethyn, prince of North Wales; of Malcolm, king of Scotland; and of Sweyn, king of Denmark.

Besides the injuries inflicted upon their country, the two leaders of this rebellion had private insults to atone. The Conqueror, at the time of his election to the crown, had promised his daughter in marriage to Edwin, in order to



Silver Penny of William the Conqueror.

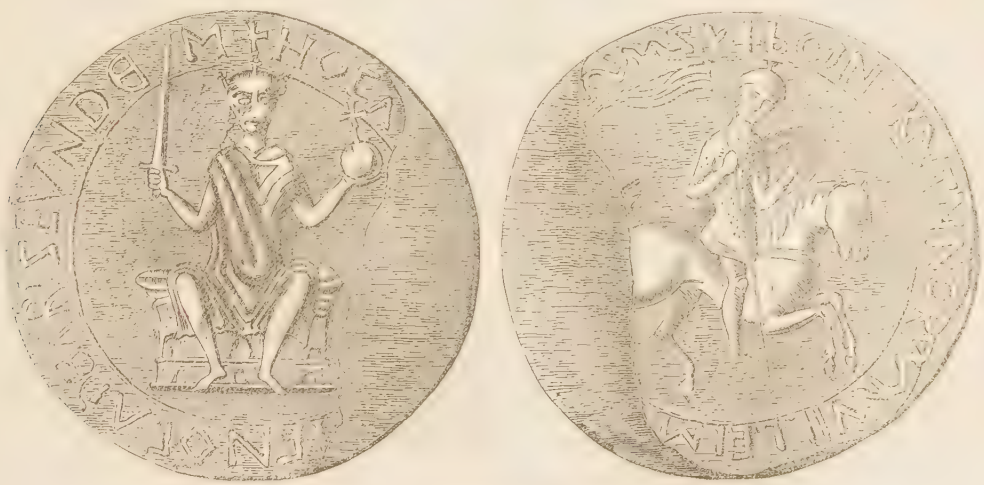
secure his adherence; but when the king was called upon to fulfil his engagement he refused to do so, and this disappointment induced the two brothers to take up arms against him.

None knew better than William the importance of celerity in quelling a revolt, especially when supported by such powerful leaders. He advanced, therefore, with rapid marches towards the north. On his way he gave orders to fortify Warwick castle, which he committed to the government of Henry de Beaumont, one of his nobles; and that of Nottingham to William Peverell, another Norman leader.

Using the utmost expedition, the Conqueror reached York before the arrival of the promised succours, or the English were prepared for resistance; and the two earls had no other resource than to appeal to the clemency of the victor.

Archil, a potent nobleman in those parts, imitated their example, and delivered his son as a hostage for his fidelity; nor were the people, thus deserted by their leaders, able to make any farther resistance. But the treatment which William gave the chiefs was very different from that which fell to the share of their followers. He observed religiously the terms which he had granted to the former, and allowed them for the present to keep possession of their estates; but he extended the rigours of his confiscations over the latter, and gave away their lands to his foreign adventurers. These, planted throughout the whole country, and in possession of the military power, left Edwin and Morcar, whom he pretended to spare, destitute of all support, and ready to fall whenever he should think proper to command their ruin. A peace which he made with Malcolm, who did him homage for Cumberland, seemed at the same time to deprive them of all prospect of foreign assistance.

The English were now sensible that their final destruction was intended; and that, instead of a sovereign, whom they had hoped to gain by their submissions, they had tamely surrendered themselves without resistance to a tyrant and a conqueror. Though the early confiscation of the estates of Harold's followers might seem iniquitous, being inflicted on men who had never sworn fealty to the duke of Normandy, who were ignorant of his pretensions, and who only fought in defence of the government which they themselves had established in their own country; yet were these rigours, however contrary to the ancient Saxon laws, excused on account of the urgent necessities of the prince; and those who were not involved in the present ruin, hoped that they should thenceforth enjoy, without molestation, their possessions and their dignities; but the successive destruction of so many other families convinced them that the king intended to rely entirely on the support and affections of foreigners; and they foresaw new forfeitures, attainders,



Great Seal of William the Conqueror.

and acts of violence, as the necessary result of this destructive plan of administration. They observed, that no Englishman possessed his confidence, or was entrusted with any command or authority; and that the strangers, whom a rigorous discipline could have but ill-restrained, were encouraged in their insolence and tyranny.

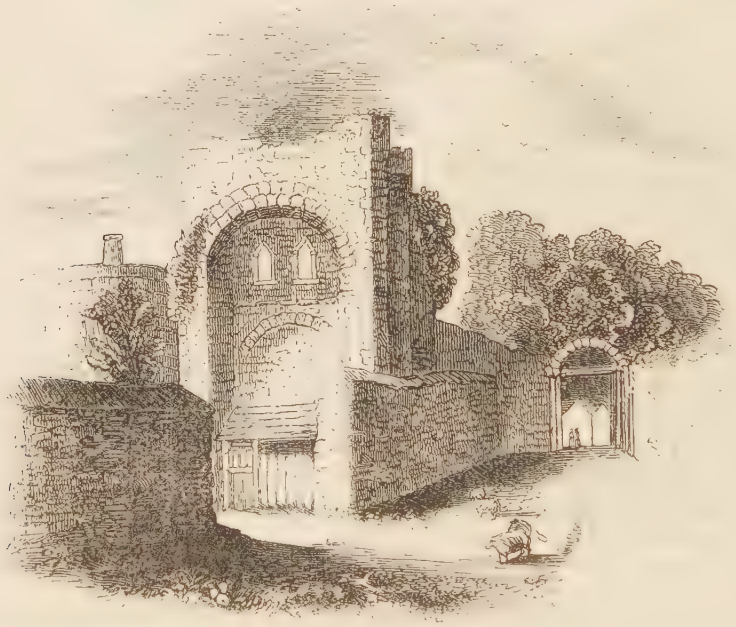
Convinced of the hopelessness of resistance, many of the English fled to foreign countries to seek that security denied them in their own.

Edgar Atheling, dreading the unscrupulous policy of William, yielded to the advice of Cospatrick, a powerful Northumbrian noble, and fled with him, accompanied by his mother Agatha and his two sisters Margaret and Christina, to Scotland, where they were hospitably received by Malcolm, who soon afterwards espoused the former princess—the latter became a nun. If the English were thus oppressed, and driven from their homes, the position of the conquerors was anything but an agreeable one. On all sides they were surrounded by bitter enemies, who, if too feeble and disunited to oppose them in the field, never failed to slay them, singly or in small parties, whenever an

opportunity offered. Many Norman nobles followed the example of Hugh de Grentmesnil and Humphrey de Tilleuil, threw up their commands, and returned to their own country, a proceeding which William resented by depriving them of the possessions he had bestowed upon them in England. The Norman army was speedily reinforced by the arrival of fresh adventurers from Normandy and other parts of the continent, and it was not long before the king found occupation for their swords. Godwin, Edmund, and Magnus, three sons of Harold, had, immediately after the defeat at Hastings, sought a retreat in Ireland, where, having met with a kind reception from Dermot and other princes of that country, they projected an invasion of England, and they hoped that all the exiles from Denmark, Scotland, and Wales, assisted by forces from these several countries, would at once commence hostilities, and rouse the English against their haughty conquerors. They landed in Devonshire; but found Earl Beorn, at the head of some foreign troops, ready to oppose them, and, being defeated in several actions, they were obliged to retreat to their ships, and return with great loss to Ireland. The efforts of the Normans were now directed to the north, where affairs had fallen into the utmost confusion. Robert de Comine, who with 1,200 Norman lances had attacked Durham, and massacred a few defenceless men, was surprised in the town by the exasperated people, and put to death with the whole of his followers. This success animated the inhabitants of York, who, rising in arms, besieged in the castle William Malet, their governor. Two years afterwards the Danish troops landed from 240 vessels; Osberne, brother to king Sweyn, was entrusted with the command of these forces, and he was accompanied by Harold and Canute, two sons of that monarch; Edgar Atheling appeared from Scotland, and brought along with him Cospatrick, Waltheof, Siward, Bearne, Merleswain, Adelin, and other leaders, who, partly from the hopes which they gave of Scottish succours, partly from their authority in those parts, easily persuaded the warlike and discontented Northumbrians to join the insurrection. Malet, that he might better provide for the defence of the citadel of York, set fire to some houses which lay contiguous; but this expedient proved the immediate cause of his destruction. The flames, spreading into the neighbouring streets, reduced the whole city to ashes. The enraged inhabitants, aided by the Danes, took advantage of the confusion to attack the castle, which they carried by assault, and put the garrison, consisting of three thousand men, to the sword.

This success gave the signal for the inhabitants of many other parts of England to show their hatred of the Normans. Hereward, a noble of East Anglia, assembled a considerable force, and taking a position on the island of Ely, made successful incursions in the country round him.

The English, in the counties of Somerset and Dorset, rose in arms and assaulted Montacute, the Norman governor, while the warlike inhabitants of Cornwall laid siege to Devon and Exeter, which, from a grateful recollection of the clemency William had shown them, remained faithful to his interests.



Rougemont Castle, Exeter.

Edric the Forester laid siege to Shrewsbury, and made head against Brient and Fitz-Osborn, who commanded there. In short, the whole nation rose, like a man suddenly awakened from a dream, and seemed resolved to atone for the abjectness of their previous submission by a vigorous and well organised resistance to their oppressors. William, however, appeared undismayed by the storm lowering on every side around him, and little as he can be said to have had justice upon his side, it is impossible not to admire the energy and courage with which he met danger.

Calling his army together, he marched rapidly towards the north, where the rebellion appeared the most formidable, knowing that a defeat there would strike terror to the rest of the insurgents.

Joining policy with force, he made a separate treaty with the Danes, offering them, as the price of their withdrawal into Denmark, permission to plunder and ravage the sea-coasts.

Cospatrick, also, despairing of success, paid to the Conqueror a large sum to be received once more into favour; he was afterwards invested with the earldom of Northumberland as the price of his submission. Even Edric, obliged by necessity, submitted to William and was pardoned.

The king of Scotland arrived too late with his succours, and found himself obliged to retire, and all the insurgents in various parts of the country either dispersed or laid down their arms, with the exception of the East Anglian noble Hereward, who still kept possession of the island of Ely.

Edgar Atheling, finding himself unsupported, withdrew with his followers and friends once more into Scotland, and the kingdom, without any great battle being fought, once more submitted to the iron yoke of the Normans.

In the crisis in which he found himself suddenly placed, William displayed his usual deceitful policy, and affected a gentleness foreign to his nature. But this seeming clemency towards the English leaders proceeded only from artifice; his heart was hardened against all compassion towards the people; and he scrupled at no measure however violent or severe, which seemed requisite to support the plans he had adopted. Sensible of the restless disposition of the Northumbrians, he determined to incapacitate them ever after from giving disturbance, and he issued orders for laying entirely waste that fertile country, which for the extent of sixty miles lies between the Humber and the Tees. The houses were reduced to ashes by the merciless Normans; the cattle seized and driven away; the instruments of husbandry destroyed; and the inhabitants compelled either to seek for subsistence in the southern parts of Scotland; or, if they lingered in England, from a reluctance to abandon their ancient habitations, they perished miserably in the woods from cold and hunger. The lives of 100,000 persons are computed to have been sacrificed to this stroke of barbarous policy, which, by seeking a remedy for a temporary, evil, thus inflicted a lasting wound on the power and opulence of the nation.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Continuation of the Reign of William the Conqueror—Depression of the English—Introduction of the Feudal Laws.

William, finding himself entirely master of a people who had given him such sensible proofs of their impotent rage and animosity, now resolved to proceed to extremities against all the natives of England, and to reduce them to a condition in which they should no longer be formidable. The insurrections and conspiracies in so many parts of the kingdom had involved the bulk of the landed proprietors, more or less, in the guilt of treason; and the king took advantage of executing against them, with the utmost rigour, the laws of forfeiture and attainder. Their lives were generally speaking spared; but their estates were confiscated, and either annexed to the crown, or bestowed upon the Norman nobility.

Thus many ancient families were reduced to beggary; and had the mortification of seeing their lands in the possession of strangers, as well as finding themselves excluded from office and employment.

William, as has been observed, was not only the most warlike, but one of the most politic princes of his time. Knowing that power followed property, he took care to establish such institutions in the country as would retain the military authority of the kingdom in the hands of those who had assisted him to obtain possession of the throne. With this view the feudal law was introduced into the island. The lands, with the exception of the royal domains, were, with a few exceptions, divided into baronies, which he conferred upon his followers, who held them by military service due to the crown.

The new barons subdivided their lands amongst their knights and vassals, whom they bound to them by the same tenure, paying to their chief in time of peace or war the same species of service which they rendered to the sovereign.

The entire kingdom was thus divided into about 700 fiefs, and upwards of 60,000 knights' fees or holdings.

As none of the English were admitted into the first class, the few who were permitted to retain possession of land were only too glad to be received into the second division, and, under the protection of some favoured Norman noble, hold by the feudal tenure the estates which had descended to them free from their ancestors.

The Conqueror placed the ecclesiastical revenues of the country under the same law; he was no longer under the necessity of wearing a mask with the clergy, whom on his first arrival he found it necessary to court. The bishops and abbots were bound to furnish him during war with a certain number of knights, in proportion to the extent of their possessions, and were rendered liable in case of failure to the same penalties as the laity.

It was in vain that the Pope and the church protested against this innovation. William was now absolute master, and the army devoted to him. He had little to fear from ecclesiastical menaces. The great body of the priesthood were still Saxons, and the politic king knew well the effects which might arise from their opposition to his interests; he, therefore, expelled them from the principal dignities, and advanced Norman and other prelates in their places.

Amongst the Saxon churchmen was Stigand, archbishop of Canterbury, a man who by the greatness of his birth, the extent of his possessions, and the dignity of his office, gave great cause of jealousy to the Conqueror.

Not deeming it safe to violate the respect due to the primate, William waited the arrival of the bishop of Sion, the legate of the pope in England, the first who ever appeared in that character in the island. It was not deference to the see of Rome alone which induced William to receive the papal envoy, but the desire of using him for a political purpose which he had long meditated; and the legate consented to become the supporter of his tyranny.

He summoned, therefore, a council of the prelates and abbots at Winchester; and being assisted by two cardinals, Peter and John, he cited before him Stigand, archbishop of Canterbury, to answer for his conduct. The primate was accused of three crimes: the holding of the see of Winchester, together with that of Canterbury; the officiating in the pall of Robert, his predecessor; and the having received his own pall from Benedict IX., who was after-

wards deposed for simony, and for intrusion into the papacy. These crimes of Stigand were mere pretences; since the first had been a practice not unusual in England, and was never anywhere subjected to a higher penalty than a resignation of one of the sees; the second was a pure ceremonial; and as Benedict was the only pope who then officiated, and his acts were never repealed, all the prelates of the church, especially those who lived at a distance, were excusable for making their applications to him. Stigand's ruin, however, was resolved on, and was prosecuted with great severity. The legate degraded him from his dignity: the king confiscated his estate, and cast him into prison, where he continued in poverty and want during the remainder of his life.

Battle Abbey.

Like rigour was exercised against the other English prelates:—Agelric, bishop of Selesey, and Agelmare, of Elmham, were deposed by the legate, and imprisoned by the king. Many considerable abbots shared the same fate: Egelwin, bishop of Durham, fled the kingdom: Wulstan, of Worcester, a man of an inoffensive character, was the only English prelate that escaped this general proscription.

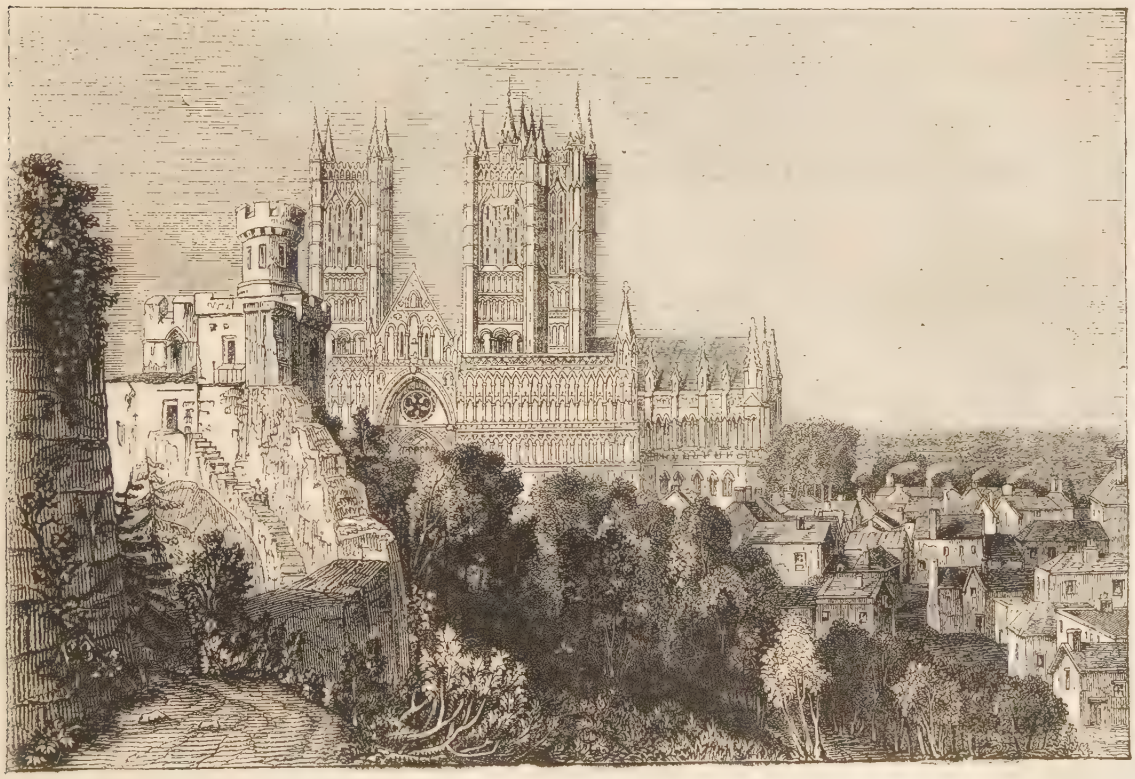
Brompton relates, that the last named bishop was also deprived of his dignities by the synod; but refusing to deliver his pastoral staff and ring to any but the person from whom he first received it, he went immediately to king Edward's tomb, and struck the staff so deeply into the stone, that none but himself was able to pull it out; on which he was allowed to retain possession of his dignity.

Aldred, archbishop of York, who had crowned the Conqueror, died, about the same time, of grief. He left his malediction, it is said, to William, on account of the wrongs he had inflicted on the people.

The deposing of Stigand gave the king an opportunity of paying a long debt of gratitude to Lanfranc, a Lombard monk, by raising him to the vacant dignity. This friar had been sent by him shortly after his marriage with Matilda to the court of Rome, to obtain the papal dispensation for their union, it having been discovered after the ceremony had taken place, that they were related within the prohibited degree.

The new archbishop showed himself exceedingly unbending, where the prerogatives of the primacy were in question. After a long contest before the pope, he compelled Thomas, a Norman monk, who had been appointed to the see of York, to acknowledge his superiority, a point which had hitherto been warmly contested between the occupants of the rival sees.

The zeal of the new primate in supporting the interests of Rome met with great success. It is true that William, during his reign, rarely felt inconvenience from it, for with his strong hand and iron will he kept the church in great subjection to the crown, and would allow none to dispute his sovereign will and pleasure. He prohibited his subjects from acknowledging any one for pope whom he himself had not previously received: he required that all the ecclesiastical canons, voted in any synod, should first be laid before him, and be ratified by his authority; even bulls, or letters from Rome, could not legally be produced, till they received the same sanction; and none of his ministers or barons, whatever offences they were guilty of, could be subjected to spiritual censures till he himself had given his consent to their excommunication.



View of Lincoln, showing the Ruins of the Castle.

CHAPTER XXX.

Reign of William I. continued—Erection of Fortresses.

In order to secure the subjection of his new subjects, the Conqueror did not neglect the important means which the erection of castles or fortresses presented. Amongst others, he either built, or caused his great vassals to build, those of Pevensey, Hastings, and the White Tower of London; and repaired that of Dover in 1066.

The following is a list of the principal fortresses erected by the Normans soon after the Conquest:—

			DATE.
Canterbury	Castle	Kent	1066
Orford	,,	Suffolk	1066
Richmond	,,	Yorkshire	1066
Skipton	,,	,,	1066
Cockermouth	,,	Cumberland	1070
Okehampton	,,	Devonshire	1066
Colchester	,,	Essex	1066
Allington	,,	Kent	1076
Leeds	,,	Yorkshire	1071
Leibourn	,,		1066
Mitford	,,	Northumberland	1070
Oxford	,,	Oxfordshire	1071
Ludlow	,,	Shropshire	1070
Bowes	,,	Yorkshire	1070
Montgomery	,,	Montgomeryshire	1092
St. Quentin's	,,	Glamorganshire	1092
Carlisle	,,	Cumberland	1095
Pembroke	,,	Pembrokeshire	1094
Carisbrook	,,	Isle of Wight	1100
Powis	,,	Montgomeryshire	1110
Dolforwyn	,,	,,	1065
Newcastle	,,	Northumberland	1121
Ogmore	,,	Glamorganshire	1120
Cardiff	,,	,,	1110
Coity	,,	,,	1091
Kenilworth	,,	Warwickshire	1100
York	,,	Yorkshire	1066
Lincoln	,,	Lincolnshire	1068

The dates of the following are less certain :—

Brough	Castle	Northumberland
Belvoir	,,	Lincolnshire
Pontefract	,,	Yorkshire
Alnwick	,,	Northumberland
Norwich	,,	Norfolk
Arundel	,,	Sussex
Chichester	,,	Sussex
Brougham	,,	Westmoreland

The above list comprises the principal, but not the only ones.

The castles or stone-built fortresses of England, previous to the conquest, were few and inconsiderable. Those erected by the Romans had fallen into ruin; and although Alfred the Great had strengthened the defences of the country by upwards of fifty towers of defence, they had not been kept up by his successors; and to this neglect the speedy reduction of the country to the Norman yoke may, in a great measure, be attributed. There were no long and wearisome sieges to undertake; no position capable of delaying an army before it for any length of time: all was left to the chance of an open battle.

At the period of the Saxon supremacy, the castles and places of strength were chiefly of wood, in proof of which the vassals who erected them were required to provide no other tools than a hatchet.

William, who perfectly comprehended the policy of the Romans, determined to alter this, and speedily commenced the erection of his strongholds, and in process of time the great feudal barons followed his example.

In order to afford an idea of these structures, we shall, as briefly as possible, give a general idea of a Norman fortress or castle.

It consisted of an enclosure, varying, according to the importance of its position, from five to ten acres of land, and, where circumstances rendered it possible, was surrounded by a moat or artificial canal, on the edge of which was a strong wall enclosing another, and between them was the first ballium, or outer court.

Within the second wall, which surrounded the keep, or great tower, were store-houses for the garrison, and other offices, as well as lodgings for the troops.

In the centre of the interior space stood the citadel, keep, or master tower, in which resided the governor, or feudal possessor; in his absence, the castellan inhabited it, exercising the same authority as his chief. This last edifice was generally erected on an artificial or natural mound, and contained the state apartments, together with the domestic offices; and in the centre, below the foundations,

Plan of a Norman Castle.

the dungeons for prisoners of war and other captives, such as felons, who had fallen under the jurisdiction of the lord or governor; in many instances there were secret means of access to these prisons by means of narrow passages contrived in the walls.

In advance of the moat stood the barbacan, or outward defence, with a watch-tower, communicating with the interior by means of a draw-bridge, which drew up inwardly, so as to be under the direction of the sentinel or guard.

The entrance to the ballium, or outward court, was still further secured by a strong gate, defended by a porteullis, to be raised or lowered as occasion required, by means of strong iron chains and pulleys. The walls were further protected by battlements, perforated by loop-holes, through which arrows could be discharged, and towers planted at various distances.

The outward walls were seldom less than seven feet in thickness, and those of the keep frequently as many as fifteen.

Before the discovery of gunpowder, and the invention of artillery, these strongholds might be considered impregnable; and when taken it was generally by famine, or through the treachery of some portion of the garrison.

Figuratively speaking, they were so many Norman bridles to check the impatience of the half-broken Saxon steed.

The English had now the mortification to find that

as William's authority increased it was employed in their oppression; that the scheme of subjection had been craftily planned, and was being relentlessly carried out, attended by every circumstance of indignity and insult calculated to wound the pride of a susceptible people.

The Conqueror even attempted to extirpate the Saxon tongue; and with that view he commanded that in all the schools throughout the country the youth should be instructed in French, which also became the language of the courts of law. Moved at last by the representations of some of the prelates, and the entreaties of his subjects, he consented to restore some of the laws of Edward the Confessor, which, although of no great importance, were regarded with affection by the people, as memorials of their ancient liberty.

The position of the two earls Morcar and Edwin soon became intolerable; for, notwithstanding that they had stood aloof during the last insurrection of their countrymen, and maintained their allegiance, William treated them with indignity, and the hungry adventurers who surrounded his court, while they envied the possessions of the Saxon nobles, thought themselves entitled to treat them with contempt as slaves and barbarians.

Sensible that with the loss of their dignity they had no longer any hope of safety, they determined, though too late, to assert the independence of their country. With this intention Edwin retired to his estates in the north, whilst his brother Morcar took refuge with the gallant Hereward, who still maintained himself in the Isle of Ely. The king, with his usual vigour, determined to subdue their stronghold; and for this purpose he caused an immense number of flat-bottomed boats to be constructed, on which he placed his men, and surrounded it. He next caused a road to be made through the morass, two miles in length, and after a desperate attack obliged the Saxons to surrender.

Hereward, however, contrived to escape, by cutting his way, sword in hand, through the enemy; and carried on the war by sea against the Normans with such success, that William was glad to compromise with him, by giving him back his estate and honours.

The memory of Hereward, "England's darling," as he was called by his countrymen, long remained cherished in their hearts, and the exploits of the last hero of Anglo-Saxon independence were for many years a favourite theme of tradition and poetry.

Morcar and Egelwin bishop of Durham, who had joined the insurgents, were taken and thrown into prison, where the last-named personage soon afterwards died of grief, whilst Edwin was slain in an attempt to escape into Scotland.

The king of Scotland, in hopes of profiting by these convulsions, had fallen on the northern counties, but on the approach of William he retired; and when Malcolm re-entered his country, he was glad to make peace, and to pay the usual homage to the English crown. To complete the Norman's king's prosperity, Edgar Atheling himself, despairing of the success of his cause, and weary of a fugitive life, submitted to his enemy; and receiving a decent pension for his subsistence, was permitted to live in England unmolested. But these acts of generosity towards the leaders were contrasted, as usual, by William's rigour against the inferior malcontents. He ordered the hands to be lopped off, and the eyes to be put out, of many of the prisoners whom he had taken in the Isle of Ely, and he dispersed them in that miserable condition throughout the country, as monuments of his severity.

Herbert, the last count or chief of the province of Maine, bordering on Normandy, had bequeathed his lands to William, who had taken possession of them several years

Clifford's Tower, York, built by William the Conqueror.

before the invasion of England. In 1073, the people of Maine, instigated by Fulk, count of Anjou, rose in rebellion against William, and expelled the magistrates he had placed over them. The settled aspect of affairs in England afforded him leisure to punish this insult to his authority; but being unwilling to remove his Norman forces from the island, he carried over a considerable army, composed almost entirely of English; and joining them to some troops levied in Normandy, he entered the revolted province.

The national valour, which had been so long opposed to him, was now exerted in his favour. Signal success attended the expedition. The men of Maine were beaten by the English, many towns and villages were destroyed, and the inhabitants tendered their submission to the conqueror.

But during these transactions (1074) the government of England was greatly disturbed, and that too by those very foreigners who owed everything to the king's bounty, and whose repacious disposition he had tried in vain to satisfy. The Norman barons who had engaged with their duke in the conquest of England were men of independent spirit and strong will; and however implicit the obedience which they yielded to their leader in the field, it is possible that in more peaceful times they found it difficult to brook the imperious character and overbearing temper of the king.

The habit of absolute government into which William had fallen since his mastery over the English, had frequently led him to exercise an authority over the Normans themselves, which they were ill disposed to bear. The discontent became general. Roger, earl of Hereford, the son and heir of Fitz-Osborn, so long the intimate friend and counsellor of the king, had negotiated the marriage of his sister with Ralph de Gaël, earl of Norfolk. For some reason now unknown, the alliance was displeasing to the king, who sent from Normandy to forbid it. The two earls, despite the prohibition, proceeded to solemnise the union; and, foreseeing the resentment of William, prepared for a revolt.

It was during the festivities of the nuptials that they broached their design to their numerous friends and allies assembled on the occasion, by complaining of the tyranny of the king; his oppressive conduct to the unfortunate English, whom they affected to pity; his insolence to men of noble birth; and the indignity of submitting any longer to be governed by a prince of illegitimate birth.

All present, inflamed with resentment, shared in the indignation of the speakers, and a solemn compact was entered into to shake off the royal yoke. Even earl Waltheof, who was present, expressed his approval of the conspiracy, and promised to assist it.

This noble was the last of the English who possessed any great power or influence in the kingdom. After his capitulation at York, he was received into favour by the Conqueror; had even married Judith, his niece, and had been promoted to the earldoms of Huntingdon and Northampton. Cospatrick, earl of Northumberland, having, on some new disgust from William, retired into Scotland, where he received the earldom of Dunbar from the bounty of Malcolm, Waltheof was appointed his successor in that important command, and seemed still to possess the confidence and friendship of his sovereign; but as he was a man of generous principles, and loved his country, it is probable that the tyranny exercised over the English lay heavy on his mind, and destroyed all the satisfaction which he could reap from his own grandeur and advancement. When a prospect, therefore, was opened of retrieving their liberty, he hastily embraced it, while the fumes of the liquor and the ardour of the company prevented him from reflecting on the consequences of that rash attempt; but after his cool judgment returned, he foresaw that the conspiracy of those discontented barons was not likely to prove successful against the established power of William; or, if it did, that the slavery of the English, instead of being alleviated by that event, would become more grievous under a multitude of foreign leaders, factious and ambitious, whose union or discord would be equally oppressive. Tormented with these reflections, he disclosed the plans of the conspirators to his wife Judith, of whose fidelity he entertained no suspicion; but who, having secretly fixed her affections on a Norman nobleman, took this opportunity of ruining her confiding husband. She conveyed intelligence of the conspiracy to the king, and aggravated every circumstance which she believed would tend to incense him against Waltheof, and render him absolutely implacable. Meanwhile the earl, still dubious with regard to the part which he should act, discovered the secret in confession to Lanfranc, on whose probity and judgment he had a great reliance. He was persuaded by the prelate that he owed no fidelity to those rebellious barons, who had by surprise gained his consent to a crime; that his first duty was to his sovereign and benefactor, his next to himself and his family; and that, if he seized not the opportunity of making atonement for his guilt by revealing it, the temerity of the conspirators was so great, they might give some other person the means of acquiring the merit of the discovery.

Waltheof, convinced by these arguments, went at once to Normandy, where William was then residing, and confessed everything to the king, who, dissembling his resentment, thanked him for his loyalty and love; in his heart, he gave the earl no thanks for a confidence which came so late.

The conspirators, hearing of Waltheof's departure from England, concluded at once that they were betrayed, and instantly assembled in arms, before their plans were ripe for execution, and before the arrival of the Danes, with whom they had secretly entered into an alliance.

The earl of Hereford was defeated by Walter de Lacy, who, supported by the bishop of Worcester and the abbot of Evesham, prevented his passing the Severn, and penetrating into the heart of the kingdom.

The earl of Norfolk was defeated by Odo, the warlike bishop of Bayeux, who sullied his victory by commanding the right foot of his prisoners to be cut off as a punishment for their treason. Their leader escaped to Norwich, and from thence to Denmark.

William, on his arrival in England, found that he had nothing left to do but punish the instigators and leaders of the revolt, which he did with great rigour; many were hanged; some had their eyes put out; others their hands cut off, or were otherwise horribly mutilated. The only indulgence he showed was to the earl of Hereford, who was condemned to lose his estate, and kept a prisoner during pleasure. The king appeared disposed to remit the last part of the sentence, probably from the recollection of his father's services, and the dread of increasing the discontent of the Norman barons, but the haughty and unbending

spirit of the earl provoked William to extend the sentence to a perpetual confinement.

Waltheof, being an Englishman, was not treated with so much humanity; though his guilt, always much inferior to that of the other conspirators, was atoned for by an early repentance. William, instigated by his niece Judith, as well as by his rapacious courtiers, who longed for the forfeiture of so rich an estate, ordered the thane to be tried, condemned, and executed. The English, who considered Waltheof as the last hope of their nation, grievously lamented his fate, and fancied that miracles were wrought by his relics, as a testimony of his innocence and sanctity. The infamous Judith, falling soon afterwards under the king's displeasure, was abandoned by all the world, and passed the rest of her life in contempt, remorse, and misery.

Nothing remained to complete William's satisfaction but the punishment of Ralph de Gaël; and he hastened over to Normandy in order to gratify his vengeance on that criminal; but, though the contest seemed very unequal between a private nobleman and the king of England, Ralph was so well supported both by the earl of Brittany and the king of France, that William, after besieging him for some time in Dol, was obliged to abandon the enterprise, and make with those powerful princes a peace, in which Ralph himself was included. England, during his absence, remained in tranquillity, and nothing remarkable occurred, except two ecclesiastical synods, which were summoned, one at London, another at Winchester. In one of these the precedency among the episcopal sees was settled: and the seat of some of them was removed from small villages to the most considerable town within the diocese.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Insurrection at Durham.—Death of the Bishop.—Expedition of William against Scotland.—Invasion and Retreat of the Danes.

William to the end of his reign no longer had any serious difficulties to contend with from the Saxons, the national spirit being broken and subdued beneath his iron yoke. The conspiracies which ensued were now those of the Normans; the partial insurrections that took place were instigated chiefly by private vengeance against some local oppressor.

In one of these insurrections perished Walcher, bishop of Durham, a prelate originally from Lorraine, and elevated by the new king to the see of St. Cuthbert.

Historians who have written of this remarkable man agree in describing him as no less distinguished for his attainments than the excellence of his moral character: he was good but feeble, and lacked the energy necessary to restrain the evil doers in the troublesome times in which he lived. His tragical death is said to have been predicted by the widow of Edward the Confessor, who resided at Winchester, where the bishop was consecrated.

When she saw him conducted in great pomp to the cathedral, struck by his venerable air and majestic demeanour, she exclaimed to those around her, "Behold a noble martyr."

Like many other prophecies, it doubtless might have been forgotten, had not circumstances afterwards caused its fulfilment.

On the death of Waltheof, the government of Northumberland was confided by William to this venerable prelate, who thus united in his hands the temporal as well as the spiritual power; repressing by the sword the excesses of the barbarous people whom he was called to govern, and instructing them by the word.

His own disposition being good, he suspected no ill in others; and giving much time to study, delegated a great share of his authority to one Gilbert, his archdeacon, an ecclesiastic of ardent character, who committed great crimes and exactions, and permitted the soldiers to pillage and slay the inhabitants of the diocese, without listening to their prayers for redress.

It was in vain that the good bishop tried to temper the harshness of this man by associating with him a relative of his own, one Leob, who sided with the archdeacon in all his exactions; or took to his councils a noble Saxon, Leulf, uncle to the deceased Waltheof. The two tyrants disregarded the remonstrances of the latter, and continued their career of crime and oppression. Leob, enraged at the reproaches of Leulf, demanded his life of his confederate Gilbert, who entered the house of the Saxon, and slew him with most of his followers.

The murdered man not only held vast possessions, but was greatly esteemed on account of the justice of his character, and the crime excited such unusual indignation that the people, excited by his relatives and friends, flew to arms, demanding vengeance on the criminals. The bishop, in an agony of fear, sent messengers to say that justice should be done; that he would place out of the pale of the law Gilbert and his accomplices; that he himself was innocent of the death of Leulf, and offered to purge himself by oath of all suspicion of the deed. This offer was accepted, and the two parties met at a church near Durham, a ferocious and armed multitude on one side, frantic for vengeance. They had seen, they said, the assassins received and sheltered in the episcopal palace directly after the commission of the crime.

Walcher, alarmed by their cries, refused to trust himself amongst them, but offered to take the oath in the church, where he was surrounded, together with Leob and Gilbert, the actual murderers. In the midst of this tumult the Saxon cry of "Short rede—good rede," signifying "Short words—good words," was raised, and their leader called out, "Slay the bishop!"

The multitude, delighted with the order, rushed to the sacred edifice, and attempted to set it on fire.

In this peril the prelate commanded Gilbert, who had actually committed the offence, to quit the church, lest, as he said, the innocent should perish with the guilty; the archdeacon obeyed, and was speedily torn in pieces by the Saxons. Leob refused to quit the place, which he vainly hoped would shelter him, although the flames had begun to penetrate in every part.

Then it was that the bishop took the resolution of quitting the building, in the hope that the lives of his companions might be spared. Covering his face with his mantle, he advanced amongst the crowd, but soon fell pierced by a hundred wounds. His guilty relative, and those who were with him, perished in the flames.

Excited by this success, the insurgents returned to Durham, and attempted to become masters of the citadel of the murdered bishop, but the garrison, which was composed of Normans, beat them off, and they dispersed themselves in the neighbouring country.

No sooner did the report of this insurrection reach the ears of Odo, the grand justiciary of the kingdom, than he

marched towards Durham with a strong body of men to restore order. Incensed at the death of his brother prelate, he gave license to his soldiery to ravage and destroy. The horrors that ensued were fearful. The innocent suffered with the guilty. Whenever a Saxon was met with he was put to death, with circumstances of such appalling barbarity that we cannot venture to describe them.

This scene of horrors took place in 1080, and fell with double hardship on the inhabitants, who had not yet recovered from the incursion which Malcolm, king of Scotland, had made a short time previously in the province.

William resolved to chastise the Scots once more, and for that purpose entrusted the command of an expedition to his eldest son Robert, surnamed Ceurte-heuse, on account of the shortness of his legs. But on the arrival of the prince in Northumbria, he no longer found an enemy to oppose him, Malcolm and his troops having retired into their own country. The only result therefore of the enterprise was the founding of the town of Newcastle, upon the banks of the river Tyne.

The following year the king marched into Wales in person, with numerous forces, and overran a considerable portion of the country, delivering, in the course of his progress, upwards of three hundred Saxons, whom the Welsh had enslaved.

From this excursion he was speedily recalled by a confederacy entered into against him by the Danes, whose king, Canute the Younger, laid claim to the crown of England, and with this intention entered into an alliance with Olave, king of Norway, and with his brother-in-law Robert, count of Flanders, who promised him a succour of six hundred vessels.

William felt the utmost alarm at the alliance, which seriously menaced his throne, and enlisted under his banners a crowd of mercenaries from every part of Europe, whom he paid by the enormous contributions wrung from his English subjects. The Danish army, however, dispersed without a battle, either from insubordination or want of supplies, or perhaps from both causes united.

Depopulation of Hampshire, to form the New Forest.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Revolt of Robert, the eldest Son of the Conqueror—His Submission - Death of Matilda—Arrest of Odo, Bishop of Bayeux—Doomsday-Book.

ALTHOUGH released from external menaces, it was not permitted to the Conqueror to enjoy repose in the last years of his eventful reign. Ordericus Vitalis in speaking of him says, "He was afflicted by the just judgment of God. Since the death of Waltheof, whom he had so unjustly punished, he had neither repose nor peace, and the astonishing course of his success was poisoned by the troubles which those related to him occasioned."

When William first received the submission of the province of Maine, he had promised the inhabitants that Robert should be their prince; and, before he undertook the expedition against England, he had, on the application of the French court, declared him his successor in Nor-

mandy, and had obliged the barons of that duchy to do him homage as their future sovereign. By this artifice, he had endeavoured to appease the jealousy of his neighthe homely saying, that he never intended to throw off his clothes till he went to bed. Robert openly declared his discontent; and was suspected of secretly instigating the

William the Conqueror and his son Robert (see page 104).

bours, as affording them a prospect of separating England from his dominions on the continent; but, when Robert demanded of him the execution of those engagements, he gave him an absolute refusal, and told him, according to king of France and the earl of Brittany to the opposition which they made to William, and which had formerly frustrated his attempts on the town of Dol; and, as the quarrel still augmented, Robert proceeded to entertain a

strong jealousy of his two surviving brothers, William and Henry (for Richard was killed in hunting by a stag), who, by greater submission and complaisance, had acquired the affections of their father. In this disposition on both sides, a small matter sufficed to produce a rupture between them.

The three princes, residing with their father in the castle of l'Aigle, in Normandy, were one day engaged in sport together; and, after some mirth and jollity, the two younger took a fancy of throwing over some water on Robert, as he passed through the court on leaving their apartment;—a frolic, which he would naturally have regarded as innocent, had it not been for the suggestions of Alberic de Grentmesnil, son of that Hugh de Grentmesnil whom William had formerly deprived of his fortunes, when that baron deserted him during his greatest difficulties in England. The young man, mindful of the injury, persuaded the prince that this action was meant as a public affront, which it behoved him in honour to resent; and the choleric Robert, drawing his sword, ran up stairs, with an intention of taking revenge on his brothers. The whole castle was filled with tumult, which the king himself, who hastened from his apartment, found some difficulty in appeasing. He could by no means calm the resentment of his eldest son, who, complaining of his father's partiality, and fancying that no proper atonement had been made for the insult, left the court that very evening, and hastened to Rouen, with the intention of seizing the citadel of that place. Disappointed in this attempt by the precaution and vigilance of Roger de Ivery, the governor, he fled to Hugh de Neufchatel, a powerful Norman baron, who gave him protection in his castles; and he levied war openly against his father. The popular character of the prince, and a similarity of manners, engaged all the young nobility of Normandy and Maine, as well as of Anjou and Brittany, to take part with him; and it was suspected, that Matilda, his mother, whose favourite he was, supported him in his rebellion by secret remittances of money, which so enraged her husband, that despite the affection he is known to have borne her, he is said to have beaten her with his own hand.

All the hereditary provinces of William were convulsed by this war, and he was at last compelled to draw an army from England to assist him. These forces, led by his ancient captains, soon enabled him to drive Robert and his adherents from their strongholds, and re-establish his authority; the rebellious son himself being driven to seek a retreat in the castle of Gerberay, which the king of France, who had secretly fomented these dissensions, placed at his disposal. In this fortress he was closely besieged by his angry father, and many encounters took place in the sorties made by the garrison.

In one of these Robert engaged the king without knowing him, wounded him in the arm, and unhorsed him. On William calling out for assistance, his son recognised his voice, and, filled with horror at the idea of having so nearly become a parricide, threw himself at his feet, and asked pardon for his offences. William's mortification, however, and rage, did not permit him to reply to this dutiful submission as he ought to have done; breathing a malediction upon his heir, he mounted his son's horse, and rode sullenly away.

The entreaties of the queen, and other influences, soon afterwards brought about a reconciliation; but it is thought the Conqueror in his heart never forgave his son, although he afterwards took Robert to England. This occurred previous to the expedition recorded in the preceding chapter, in which he sent his son to oppose the king of Scotland.

The tranquillity which now ensued gave William leisure to begin an undertaking which proves the comprehensive nature of his talents; it was a general survey of all the lands in the kingdom, in 1081, their extent in each district, their proprietors, tenures, value; the quantity of meadow, pasture, wood, and arable land which they contained; and, in some counties, the number of tenants, cottagers, and slaves of all denominations who lived on them. He appointed commissioners for this purpose, who entered every particular in their register by the verdict of juries; and, after a labour of six years (for the work was so long in finishing), brought him an exact account of all the landed property in England. This monument, called Domesday-book—the most valuable piece of antiquity possessed by any nation—is still preserved in the Exchequer, and, though only some extracts of it have hitherto been published, it serves to illustrate, in many particulars, the ancient condition of England. The great Alfred had finished a like survey of the kingdom in his time, which was long kept at Winchester, and which probably served as a model to William in his undertaking.

William, in common with all the great men of the time, was passionately addicted to the chase; a pastime he indulged in at the expense of his unhappy subjects. Not content with the royal domains, he resolved to make a new forest near Winchester, his usual place of abode, and for this purpose laid waste a tract of country extending above thirty miles, expelling the inhabitants from their houses, and seizing on their property without affording them the least compensation; neither did he respect the churches and convents—the possessions of the clergy as well as laity were alike confiscated to his pleasures.

At the same time, he enacted penalties, more severe than had hitherto been known in England, against hunting in any of the royal forests. The killing of a deer, wild boar, or hare was punished by the loss of the offender's eyes—and that at a time when the slaying of a fellow creature might be atoned by the payment of a fine.

Matilda was spared the pain of witnessing the misfortunes of her favourite son; she died in the year 1085. Matthew Paris, in speaking of her, says, "She was an incomparably noble and pious princess, whose generous gifts were the joy of the church."

Although the wife of William possessed many virtues, her character was far from being perfect. It was her influence which induced her husband to put the earl of Gloucester to death, and to confiscate his possessions to her use. She never forgave that unhappy noble for having rejected her love.

It is even said that one of the conditions on which she married William was, that he should minister to her revenge. Certain it is, that she refused the latter when he first made proposals for her hand, which so much incensed the Norman duke, that meeting her in the streets of Bruges, as she returned from the church, he not only beat her, but rolled her in the dirt. Notwithstanding which unknightly outrage, she afterwards consented to become his wife.

The transactions recorded during the remainder of this reign may be considered more as domestic occurrences which

concern the prince, than as national events which regard England. Odo, bishop of Bayeux, the king's uterine brother, whom he had created earl of Kent, and entrusted with a great share of power during his whole reign, had amassed immense riches; and, agreeably to the usual progress of human wishes, he began to regard his present acquisitions but as a step to farther grandeur. He had formed the chimerical project of buying the papacy; and the papal throne, he would bestow on them more considerable establishments in that country. The king, from whom all these projects had been carefully concealed, at last got intelligence of the design, and ordered Odo to be arrested. His officers, from respect to the immunities which the ecclesiastics now assumed, scrupled to execute the command, till the king himself was obliged in person to seize him; and when Odo insisted that he was a prelate, and

William the Conqueror arrests with his own hand Odo, Bishop of Bayeux.

though Gregory, the reigning pope, was not of advanced years, the prelate had confided so much in the predictions of an astrologer, that he reckoned on the pontiff's death, and on attaining, by his own intrigues and money, that envied state of greatness. Resolving, therefore, to remit all his riches to Italy, he had persuaded many considerable barons, and, among the rest, Hugh, earl of Chester, to take the same course; in hopes that when he should mount exempt from all temporal jurisdiction, William replied, that he arrested him not as bishop of Bayeux, but as earl of Kent. He was sent prisoner to Normandy; and notwithstanding the remonstrances and menaces of Gregory, was detained in custody during the remainder of William's reign.

William was detained upon the continent some time after this affair, by a quarrel which, in 1087, broke out between

himself and his suzerain the king of France, and was occasioned by inroads which the French barons made into Normandy. His displeasure was also increased by some railleries which had been thrown out against his person. The king had grown remarkably stout, and been detained for some time upon a bed of sickness. Philip, hearing of this, expressed his surprise that his brother of England should be so long at his lying-in, but that no doubt there would be a fine churching when he was delivered. The Conqueror, enraged at the insulting jest, sent him word, that as soon as he was up he would be churched in Notre Dame, and present so many lights, alluding to the Catholic custom, as would give little pleasure to the king of France. Immediately on his recovery he kept his word; for, gathering an army, he led his forces into the L'Isle de France, laying everything waste with fire and sword in his passage, and took the town of Mante, which he reduced to ashes.

This career of conquest, however, was cut short by an accident which afterwards cost William his life. His horse starting on a sudden, caused him to bruise his stomach severely against the pommel of his saddle. Being advanced in years, he began to apprehend the consequences, and ordered himself to be conveyed to the monastery of St. Gervas. Finding his end approaching, he perceived the vanity of all human greatness, and began to feel the most bitter remorse of conscience for the cruelties he had practised, the desolation he had caused, and the innocent blood he had shed during his reign in England; and by way of atonement gave great gifts to various monasteries. He also commanded that earls Morcar, Siward, Beorn, and other English prisoners should be set at liberty. He was now prevailed upon, though not without reluctance, to release his brother Odo, against whom he was terribly incensed.

He left Normandy and Maine to his eldest son Robert, whom he had never forgiven for his rebellion against him. He wrote to Lanfranc, the primate, desiring him to crown William king of England, and bequeathed to his son Henry the possessions of his mother; foretelling, it is said, that he would one day surpass both his brothers in greatness.

He died on the 9th of September, in the sixty-third year of his age, the twenty-first of his reign in England, and fifty-fourth over Normandy.

Few princes have been more fortunate than William, or better entitled to grandeur and prosperity, from the abilities and the vigour of mind displayed in all his conduct. His spirit was bold and enterprising, yet guided by prudence; his ambition, which was exorbitant, and lay little under the restraints of justice, still less under those of humanity, ever submitted to the dictates of sound policy. Born in an age when the minds of men were intractable and unacquainted with submission, he was yet able to direct them to his purposes; and partly from the influence of his vehement character, partly from art and dissimulation, to establish an unlimited authority. The maxims of his administration were austere; but might have been useful, had they been solely employed to preserve order in an established government; they were ill calculated for softening the rigours, which, under the most gentle management, are inseparable from conquest. His attempt against England was the last great enterprise of the kind which, during the course of 800 years, has fully succeeded in Europe; and the force of his genius broke through those limits, which the feudal institutions, and the refined policy of princes, have fixed to the several states of Christendom.

King William had issue, besides his three sons who survived him, five daughters; to wit,—1. Cicely, a nun in the monastery of Fescamp, afterwards abbess in the Holy Trinity at Caen, where she died in 1127;—2. Constantia, married to Alan Fergent, earl of Brittany: she died without issue;—3. Alice, contracted to Harold;—4. Adela, married to Stephen, earl of Blois, by whom she had four sons, William, Theobald, Henry, and Stephen, of whom the elder was neglected on account of the imbecility of his understanding;—5. Agatha, who died a virgin, but was betrothed to the king of Gallicia: she died on her journey thither, before she joined her bridegroom.

A learned historian gives the following more circumstantial account of William's death and character. He says, "Early on the morning of the 9th of September, 1087, the king heard the sound of a bell, and eagerly demanded what it meant. He was told that it sounded the hour of prime in the church of St. Mary. 'Then,' said he, 'I commend my soul to my Lady, the mother of God, that by her holy prayers she may reconcile me to her son, my Lord Jesus Christ,' and immediately expired."

From the events which followed the reader may judge of the unsettled nature of the time. The knights and prelates hastened to their respective homes to secure their property; the citizens of Rouen began to conceal their most valuable effects; the servants rifled the palace, and hurried away with the booty, and the royal corpse for three hours lay almost in a state of nudity on the ground. At length the archbishop ordered the body to be interred at Caen: and Herluin, a neighbouring knight, out of compassion, conveyed it at his own expense to that city.

At the day appointed for the interment, prince Henry, the Norman prelates, and a multitude of clergy and people assembled in the church of St. Stephen, which the Conqueror had founded. The mass had been performed, the corpse was placed on the bier, and the bishop of Evreux had pronounced the panegyric of the deceased, when a voice from the crowd exclaimed, "He whom you have praised, was a robber. The very land on which you stand is mine. By violence he took it from my father; and in the name of God I forbid you to bury him in it." The speaker was Asceline Fitz Arthur, who had often, but fruitlessly, sought reparation from the justice of William. After some debate the prelates called him to them, paid him sixty shillings for the grave, and promised that he should receive the full value of his land. The ceremony was then continued, and the body of the king deposited in a coffin of stone. William's character has been drawn with apparent impartiality in the Saxon Chronicle, by a contemporary and an Englishman. That the reader may learn the opinion of one who possessed the means of forming an accurate judgment, we have transcribed the passage, retaining, as far as it may be intelligible, the very phraseology of the original:—

"If any one wish to know what manner of man he was, or what worship he had, or of how many lands he were the lord, we will describe him as we have known him: for we looked on him, and some time lived in his herd. King William was a very wise man, and very rich, more worshipful and strong than any of his fore-gangers. He was mild to good men who loved God: and stark beyond all bounds to those who withstaid his will. On the very stede, where

God gave him to win England, he reared a noble monastery and set monks therein, and endowed it well. He was very worshipful. Thrice he bore his king-helmet every year when he was in England; at Easter he bore it at Winchester, at Pentecost at Westminster, and in mid-winter at Gloucester: and then were with him all the rich men all over England: archbishops and diocesan bishops, abbots and earls, thanes and knights. Moreover he was a very stark man, and very savage: so that no man durst do anything against his will. He had earls in his bonds, who had done against his will: bishops he set off their bishoprics, abbots off their abbotries, and thanes in prisons: and at last he did not spare his own brother Odo. Him he set in prison. Yet among other things we must not forget the good frith which he made in this land: so that a man, that was good for aught, might travel over the kingdom with his bosom full of gold without molestation: and no man durst slay another man, though he had suffered never so mickle evil from the other. He ruled over England: and by his cunning he was so thoroughly acquainted with it, that there is not a hide of land of which he did not know both who had it, and what was its worth: and that he set down in his writings. Wales was under his wield, and therein he wrought castles: and he wielded the Isle of Man withal: and moreover, he subdued Scotland by his mickle strength. Normandy was his by kinn: and over the earldom called Mans he ruled: and if he might have lived yet two years, he would have won Ireland by the fame of his power, and without any armament. Yet, truly, in his time men had mickle suffering, and very many hardships. Castles he caused to be wrought, and poor men to be oppressed. He was so very stark. He took from his subjects many marks of gold, and many hundred pounds of silver: and that he took, some by right, and some by mickle might, for very little need. He had fallen into avarice, and greediness he loved withal. He let his lands to fine as dear as he could; then came some other and bade more than the first had given, and the king let it to him who bade more. Then came a third, and bid yet more, and the king let it into the hands of the man who bade the most. Nor did he reck how sinfully his reeves got money of poor men, or how many unlawful things they did. For the more men talked of right law, the more they did against the law. He also set many deer friths: and he made laws therewith, that whosoever should slay hart or hind, him man should blind. As he forbade the slaying of harts, so also did he of boars. So much he loved the high deer, as if he had been their father. He also decreed about hares, that they should go free. His rich men moaned, and the poor men murmured: but he was so hard, that he recked not the hatred of them all. For it was need they should follow the king's will withal, if they wished to live, or have lands or goods, or his favour. Alas, that any man should be so moody, and should so puff up himself and think himself above all other men! May Almighty God have mercy on his soul, and grant him forgiveness of his sins."

To this account may be added a few particulars gleaned from other historians. The king was of ordinary stature, but inclined to corpulency. His countenance wore an air of ferocity, which, when he was agitated by passion, struck terror into every beholder. The story told of his strength at one period of his life, almost exceeds belief. It is said, that sitting on horseback, he could draw the string of a bow which no other man could bend even on foot.

William's education had left on his mind religious impressions which were never effaced. When, indeed, his power or interest was concerned, he listened to no suggestions but those of ambition or avarice, but on other occasions he displayed a strong sense of religion, and a profound respect for its institutions."

Dr. Lingard concludes this reign with the following paragraph —

"During William's reign the people of England were exposed to calamities of every description. It commenced with years of carnage and devastation: its progress was marked by a regular system of confiscation and oppression, and this succession of evils was closed with famine and pestilence. In 1086, a summer more rainy and tempestuous than had been experienced in the memory of man, occasioned a total failure in the harvest; and the winter introduced a malignant disease, which attacked one-half of the inhabitants, and is said to have proved fatal to many thousands. Even of those who escaped the infection, or recovered from the disease, numbers perished afterwards from want or unwholesome nourishment. 'Alas!' exclaims an eye-witness, 'how miserable, how rueful a time was that! The wretched victims had nearly perished by the fever; then came the sharp hunger, and destroyed them outright. Who is so hard-hearted as not to weep over such calamities?'"

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Accession of William Rufus—Conspiracy against him—Invasion of Normandy—The Crusades.

William, whose surname of Rufus is said to have been derived from the colour of his hair, no sooner found himself in possession of his father's letter to the primate Lanfranc, than he fled from the monastery of St. Gervas, where William was dying, and hastened to England, in order to secure possession of the crown.

Sensible that an act so opposed to the laws of primogeniture and the feudal rights might meet with great opposition from the nobles, he trusted to his celerity for success, and reached the kingdom before the news of the king's death arrived.

Pretending orders from the dead monarch, he secured the strong fortresses of Dover, Pevensey, and Hastings. On his arrival a council of prelates and barons was summoned to proceed to the election of a sovereign. Hitherto there had been no precedent in which the younger brother had been preferred to the elder. Robert, the rightful heir, and his partisans, were in Normandy; William and his adherents on the spot; added to which, the archbishop Lanfranc, who felt himself bound to obey the last injunction of his benefactor William, devoted the whole influence of the church in his favour.

Three weeks after the death of his father, he was proclaimed king, and crowned with the usual formalities.

As we before stated, the Conqueror on his death-bed commanded the liberation of his half-brother Odo, the bishop of Bayeux. That warlike prelate, who had recovered some portion of his possessions in Kent, had long been the enemy of Lanfranc. His prompt compliance with the will of the deceased king in crowning William, who at first

yielded himself entirely to his directions, caused Odo to extend his hatred to his nephew, and he set himself accordingly to form a party in favour of the eldest brother Robert, who was already in possession of the duchy of Normandy, as well as the county of Main.

The great point be urged upon the nobles whom he enlisted in the cause of the last-named prince, was the fact of their holding possessions in both countries, and that it would be much more prudent to hold their lands of one sovereign only.

These representations were not without effect: and whilst the newly-crowned king held the festival of Easter, the barons, who had matured their plans, departed to raise the standard of revolt in various parts of the kingdom. Odo in Kent; William, bishop of Durham, in Northumberland; Geoffery of Coutances in Somerset: Roger Montgomery in Shropshire; Hugh de Bigod in Norfolk; and Hugh de Grentmensil in Leicester.

The rising which thus took place might have been formidable, if the movements of the insurgents had been seconded by energetic action on the part of Robert. That pleasure-loving prince, who had promised to bring over an army from Normandy, once more sacrificed the prospect of a throne to his habitual indolence; and Odo waited in vain for the reinforcements which were to come across the channel. When at length single ships with detachments of the invading forces ventured from the Norman coast, they were intercepted and destroyed by English cruisers. Rufus, on learning the preparations which were making against him, had wisely permitted the fitting out of vessels, which seem to have been the first that may be called privateers, and his island subjects began thus early to give proofs of that superiority in the art of naval warfare, which they have ever since maintained. The Norman attempt at invasion was abandoned, and the English insurgents were left to sustain the shock of the king's forces as best they might.

Threatened by his own countrymen, the Red King turned for council and assistance to the more honest, and less ambitious, Anglo-Saxons. He adopted a policy of conciliation towards those nobles of Anglo-Saxon blood who still retained any influence: he made liberal promises, which afterwards were only partially fulfilled, and he obtained their adherence to his cause. The king proclaimed the old Saxon call to battle, "Let every man who is not a man of nothing,* whether he live in burgh or out of burgh, leave his house and come," and many Englishmen flocked to his standard.

William II., surnamed Rufus.

The first attacks of Rufus were directed against his uncle, Odo, of Bayeux. That fierce and turbulent bishop waited his coming at Pevensey, which he had fortified

*A "man of nothing," in Anglo-Saxon "unnithing," or "nidering," a term of abuse and contempt.

strongly and garrisoned. This stronghold was taken after a siege of a few weeks, and Odo fell into the hands of Rufus, who gave him liberty, on the condition of his taking

set form that the keys should be given up, the earl took him prisoner with his guards. This was a stratagem by which Odo hoped to escape the accusation of perjury, while

The Death of Conan. (See page 112.)

a solemn oath to deliver up Rochester Castle into the king's possession, and to quit the country immediately afterwards.

Rochester Castle was held by Eustace, earl of Boulogne, one of the warmest partisans of Robert. When Odo arrived before the gates with the king's escort, and demanded in

he continued his rebellious course of action against the king. As the real commander of the garrison, this truculent bishop sustained for many weeks the attacks of his royal nephew, who, with his united forces of English and Normans, laid siege to the castle.

At length the besieged were subdued by disease and famine, and compelled to capitulate. They sent to William, informing him of their desire, and demanding that they should be allowed to retain their lands and titles under his sovereignty. Rufus at first refused to grant such a permission; but the Norman troops in his army, who could not forget that the garrison of the castle were their countrymen, and many of whom may have had relatives or friends within the walls, made appeals to the mercy of the king. "We," they said, "who have been with thee in great dangers, entreat thee to spare our countrymen, who are thine also, and who have fought with thy father."*

After much entreaty, the king permitted the besieged to leave the town with their arms and horses. Not satisfied with this concession, Odo had the arrogance to demand that when the garrison quitted the castle the bugles of the king's troops should not sound in token of triumph, as the custom was in those days. Rufus replied angrily that he would not grant such a request for a thousand marks of gold.

The Norman adherents of Robert then passed out of the gates with ensigns lowered, and amidst the sounds of exultation from the king's troops. At the sight of Odo, a great clamour arose among the English soldiers. They remembered the thousand crimes of the soldier-bishop, and cried out that he was unfit to live. "Ropes! bring ropes!" they shouted; "hang the traitor bishop and his friends! Why is he allowed to go away in safety? The perjured murderer does not deserve his life!" Such sounds as these from every side thundered in the ears of the prelate, and thus, pursued by curses, he left the country for ever.

Meanwhile the conspirators in another part of the kingdom had met with ill success. The Earl of Shrewsbury, and with him other Norman nobles, had collected an army which was occupied in laying waste the surrounding country. The earl with his troops set out from Shrewsbury, plundering and burning towns and villages, and putting many of the inhabitants to the sword.

The progress of this marauding force was stopped on its arrival before Worcester. The citizens, excited by a deep hatred of their Norman oppressors, closed the gates, and, conveying their wives and children into the castle, prepared for a desperate resistance. Headed by their bishop, who refused to go into the castle, but took the post of danger on the walls, they gave battle to the besiegers, and having watched their opportunity when part of the Norman forces were absent on one of their plundering expeditions, the citizens sallied forth upon the remainder and cut great numbers of them to pieces.

These reverses proved fatal to the success of the conspiracy, and Rufus found little difficulty in dealing with the rest of the insurgent chiefs. Some he won to his side by promises; others, who still defied him were quickly subdued, and were visited with various degrees of punishment, or made their escape into Normandy, with the loss of their estates.

As soon as the insurrection was quelled, and all danger from that source was at an end, Rufus revoked the concessions he had made to his English subjects, and before long the Anglo-Saxon population were reduced to their previous condition of servitude and misery.

* Orderic. Vital.

The ancient monastery of St. Augustin, at Canterbury, was venerated by the people as one of the few remaining monuments of their old independence. The Normans exerted themselves to subdue the national spirit of the conquered race by repeated humiliations. Many of the time-honoured privileges of the monks of St. Augustin were remitted, and the abbot of Canterbury, though a Norman, was included in these restrictions. This man, however, hated the Saxons, and submitted willingly to the commands of the primate, which inflicted hardships on his monks. When they entreated him to prefer their complaint to the pope, he answered by imprisoning them in their cells, and by other punishments.

In 1088 this abbot died, and Lanfranc, the primate, then proceeded to Canterbury, for the purpose of installing in the vacant dignity, a Norman monk, who was in high favour with Rufus. The Saxon monks of St. Augustine, one and all, refused to acknowledge or receive the new abbot, and Lanfranc ordered them to quit the convent. A few hours later, when the disconsolate friars were seated on the ground below Canterbury castle, they received a message from the primate, permitting them to return, provided they did so at once, but with the notice that those who remained absent would be treated as vagabonds. Hunger induced several of them to accept the terms offered, and to swear obedience on the relics of St. Augustine. Those who refused to take the oath were imprisoned until they gave in their submission. A plot was nevertheless formed against the life of the abbot, and one of the conspirators, named Columban, who was taken in attempting to make his escape, confessed that he would have killed the Norman if the opportunity had offered. The primate ordered him to be bound before the gates of the monastery, and publicly flogged.

In the following year (1089), Lanfranc, archbishop of Canterbury, died, at the age of nearly 100 years. If we compare the acts of his life with those of his contemporaries, and judge of his character with a due regard to the times in which he lived, we shall find his memory entitled to our respect. It is said of him that he was "a wise, politic, and learned prelate, who, whilst he lived, mollified the furious and cruel nature of King William Rufus, instructing to forbear such wild and outrageous behaviour as his youth was inclined unto."* The archbishop built various hospitals and almshouses, and recovered 25 manors which had been wrested from the see of Canterbury. One of these was a large estate which had been seized by Odo, and which that rapacious bishop was compelled to restore.

Removed from the influence of Lanfranc, the king gave the rein to his debaucheries, and showed himself "very cruel and inconstant in all his doings, so that he became a heavy burden unto his people." He appointed no successor to the primacy, but kept the see of Canterbury vacant four years; seizing the revenues, and applying them to his own vicious purposes.

Rufus elevated to the offices of royal chaplain and chief minister of state a Norman priest, named Renouf, or Ralph, who had received the surname of le Flambard, or the Firebrand. This man, who had once been a footman in the service of the dukes of Normandy, was of bad character, ambitious, ready-witted, and a willing pander to

* Holinshed.

the vices of the king. To raise money for his royal master's pleasures, he increased the burthens of the people; inflicted heavy fines in punishment of trifling offences, and caused a second survey of the kingdom to be made, raising the estimated value of estates, and increasing the royal revenues, at the expense of great suffering throughout the country.

Contentions were continually occurring between the Saxons and their oppressors. Everywhere the Normans showed themselves cruel and avaricious; trampling down the conquered race, and treating them as inferior beings.

William Rufus and the Soldier. (See page 113.)

Ralph Flambard, who was bishop of Lincoln, ruled his diocese with such tyranny that, as we read in an old chronicle, the inhabitants wished rather to die than live under his authority. The Norman bishops introduced a

disorder of manners, which appears to have been unknown among the Saxon clergy. They marched to the altar between lines of halberdiers, and passed their days in drinking and playing at dice. "In those days," says Holinshed, "it" (the clergy) "was far out of order, not only in covetous practices, but in worldly pomp and vanity; for they had bush and braided perukes, long side garments, very gorgeous; gilt girdles, gilt spurs, with many other unseemly disorders in attire."

While such was the position of affairs in England, Robert, duke of Normandy, was passing his days among dancers and jesters, flatterers and parasites. The province under his rule had fallen into a state of anarchy: the nobles defied the authority of their indolent sovereign; and, assuming the style of independent princes, made war upon each other. Some of the Anglo-Norman barons, alarmed for the security of their property, conspired together to place Rufus in possession of Normandy, as being better fitted than his brother to govern that turbulent duchy.

The Norman fortresses of Albemarle, St. Vallery, and others, were obtained possession of by various means, and were held in the name of King William; and Conan, a powerful burgess of Rouen, had entered into the conspiracy, and engaged to betray the capital into the hands of a lieutenant of Rufus.

Robert at length was roused to the dangers which surrounded him, but finding himself without money to raise troops, he applied to Philip I. of France for assistance. Philip responded to the call, and advanced with an army to the borders of Normandy; but Rufus sent him a sum of money as a bribe, and the French king returned at once to his own country.

Deserted by his ally, Robert appealed to his brother Henry, whom he had placed some time before in possession of a portion of the Norman duchy, in return for a sum of £3,000 which Henry had advanced. Since that time frequent quarrels had occurred between them, and it is related that, on one occasion, Henry was arrested by the duke's orders, and kept for a short time in prison.

However, on receiving Robert's request for succour, Henry came to Rouen and rendered his brother important assistance. Reginald de Warrenne, the lieutenant of Rufus, was driven back and compelled to retreat, and the burgess Conan was taken prisoner.

Mingled with the many faults of Robert's character, there was a chivalrous spirit which shrank from taking a man's life in cold blood. He condemned Conan to perpetual imprisonment; but Henry—whose temper was less merciful—visited the captive, and, having on some pretence taken him to the top of a high tower, he seized him suddenly round the body and threw him over the battlements. Henry then turned to the attendants who had seen him play the part of executioner, and said that it was not fitting that such a traitor should escape condign punishment.

At the beginning of the next year the Red King * landed an English army in Normandy and advanced into the country. Robert again applied to Philip of France, who exerted himself to arrange a treaty of peace between the two brothers. By the provisions of this treaty, which was signed at Caen, the lands of Eu, Albemarle, Fescamp, and others were assigned to Rufus; and it was agreed that no further attempt should be made by Robert upon the English throne. Certain estates in England were to be given to Robert in place of those which he resigned in Normandy, and William engaged to pardon those barons who had defended his brother's cause, and to restore to them their titles and lands. The barons of the two factions agreed that if the king survived the duke, he was to have possession of Normandy; and if the duke outlived the king, he should receive the English crown. This treaty was signed by twelve barons on each side, who swore to maintain its provisions.

In the records of these dark and turbulent times we see human nature presented to us—except in a very few instances—with but two aspects;—luxury and indolence on the one hand, and cruelty allied with power on the other. Every man's hand is against every man; brother rises in arms against brother, on the most trifling provocation, or to increase possessions already too large for the control of the possessor. The king of a powerful nation places his army at the command of the highest bidder, and forsakes his ally for a bribe of money. Chivalry, slowly struggling into existence, has yet attained no influence over the minds and actions of men. Honour is an idea, admired from a distance; religion, a ceremony, or a shadow of the better times to come.

Such is the impression at first conveyed by the chronicles of these remote periods, but such is not altogether a just impression. It is the business of history to deal with the crimes of mankind rather than with their virtues. The acts prompted by ambition, the struggles for power or profit, the wiles of diplomacy or intrigue,—these are the things that influence the fate of nations and afford matter for the historian. But the virtues are of silent action: good deeds make little noise, and peaceful days are the blank pages of history. Therefore, when we read these accounts of former times, and see on every side the boisterous waves of human passion boiling up and tossing to and fro, we may believe that, through the storm and darkness, the silent stream of happiness flowed on, and that in every age a just Providence has bestowed a due share of blessings on mankind.

Peace had been concluded between the two elder sons of the Conqueror; but now some cause of quarrel arose between Robert and Rufus, on the one side, and Henry on the other. This young prince was possessed of great abilities, and an ambition unscrupulous in its aims and unrestrained by principle. It is possible that the prophecy of his future greatness, uttered by his dying father, was not forgotten by him to whom it referred. Whether Henry at this time gave any cause for just suspicion to his brothers does not appear certain; but such suspicions were excited, and the forces of the duke and the king were joined in an attack upon his territories. Henry took refuge in a castle in St. Michael's Mount, a solitary rock on the coast of Normandy, and in this strong position he sustained a long siege from the combined armies of his kinsmen.

An incident of the siege is related by some of the old chroniclers to the following effect:—The supply of water in the castle fell short, and the garrison were reduced to great distress from thirst. Robert, having been informed of this circumstance, sent a supply of wine to his brother Henry, and also permitted some of the people of the castle

* William is called by this title in the Roman de Rou and Robert of Gloucester's Chronicle.

to fetch water. This conduct incensed William, who expressed his indignation at such generosity; but Robert replied that he could not suffer his brother to die of thirst. "Where," said he, "shall we get another brother when he is gone?"

Statue of William Rufus in the Choir of York Cathedral.

There is another story told of the same siege, from which it appears that on one occasion Rufus had a narrow escape from death. The king had ridden out alone to take a survey of the fortress, when he was suddenly attacked by two of Henry's soldiers, who struck him from his horse. One of the men was about to despatch him, when Rufus called out, "Hold, knave! I am the king of England!" The soldier threw down his dagger, and raised him from the ground with professions of respect. It is related that Rufus rewarded the man with presents, and took him into his service.

According to some accounts, the besieging forces retired without having obtained possession of the fortress; but the more probable story, and that which rests on the best authority, is that Prince Henry was at length obliged to capitulate, and that he was deprived of all his estates. For two years he wandered about the continent with a scanty escort and in great poverty. At length he obtained the government of the city of Damfront, and in that position he displayed great ability, and obtained considerable power in the surrounding country.

Robert returned with Rufus to England, with the view of taking possession of the estates to which he had become entitled by the treaty of Caen. The king, however, had no intention of observing the terms of the treaty, and answered his brother's demands with excuses and delays.

Meanwhile Malcolm Caenmore had invaded England, and had penetrated "even to Chester." William sent an army to oppose him, and, according to some authorities, also fitted out a naval force, which was overtaken by a storm on the Scottish coast and destroyed.* The two armies met somewhere on the borders of Scotland, but the impending conflict was prevented by the efforts of Robert of Normandy and Edgar Atheling. A treaty of peace was concluded, by which Malcolm rendered homage to Rufus, as he had done to William the Conqueror, and was permitted to retain certain lands in Northumberland, of which he had become possessed. Edgar Atheling was allowed to return to England, where he became a hanger-on of the court, and a passive witness of the cruelties of the usurper who sat upon the throne of Alfred.

At this time (1093) Rufus gave directions for the building of a fortress at Carlisle, and having sent a number of English to inhabit the town, he granted to them many valuable privileges. This act, if not an infringement of the recent treaty with Malcolm, was at least a violation of the rights of that monarch. The county of Cumberland had been for centuries attached to the Scottish crown, and Malcolm demanded its restitution. A conference took place between the two kings, and Rufus having refused redress for the injury, Malcolm returned in haste to Scotland, and carried an army into Northumberland, burning and laying waste the country. Before Rufus could advance to meet him, the Scotch monarch had fallen into an ambush and was killed, together with his eldest son.

It is related that when the news of the death of her husband and son was brought to Margaret, the Queen of Scotland, she bowed her head beneath the stroke, and died within four days afterwards.

"Thus," says Holinshed, "by the just providence of God came king Malcolm to his end, in that province which he had wasted and spoiled five different times."

William, after his return from Carlisle, fell sick at Gloucester, and being oppressed with the recollection of his many crimes, and probably deriving little comfort from the ghostly ministrations of Ralph Flambard, he gave signs of repentance, and promised on his recovery to amend his life. The repentance, however, passed away with the danger, and he is represented as having become from this time more cruel and debauched than before.

The king still withholding from his brother Robert the possessions which were his right, the duke returned to Normandy, and sent heralds to William, according to the usage of chivalry, denouncing him as a false and perjured knight, who held possession of lands which he had resigned by treaty.

William went to Normandy to answer the charge, and agreed to submit to the decision of a court composed of the high Norman nobility. The award, however, being in favour of Robert, the Red King refused to abide by the decision, and leading an army into Normandy, he defeated the adherents of the duke in several engagements.

Events followed each other closely resembling those which took place on William's previous expedition against his brother. Robert, as before, made an appeal to Philip. The disputes between the sons of the Conqueror would seem to have been a source of considerable profit to the king of France, and his ready response to the call of Robert was probably less from a regard for his neighbour's welfare than from a view to his own interest. Rufus determined

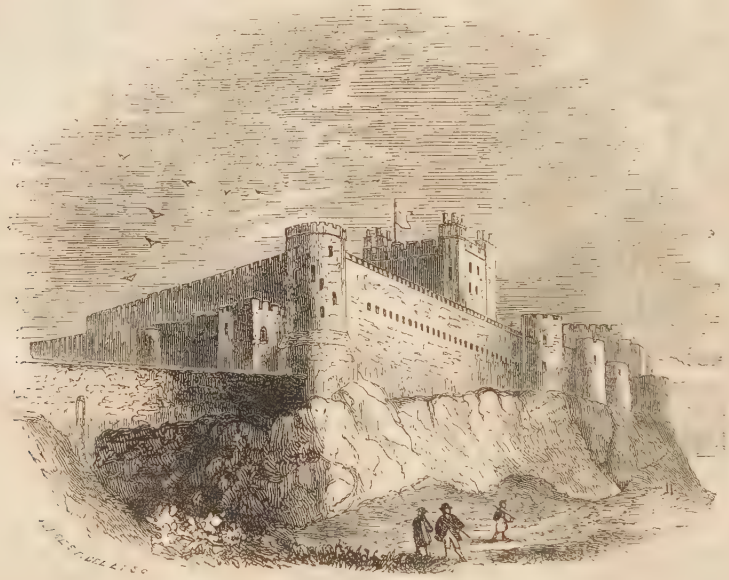
* Wil. Malms.

to buy him off as he had done before, and to obtain money for this purpose, he devised a scheme in which he had the assistance of Ralph Flambard. He ordered a levy of 20,000 men in England, and when the troops arrived at Hastings to embark, it was announced to them that the king was willing to excuse them from the dangers of the campaign, and that each man would be permitted to return to his home on payment of ten shillings towards the expenses of the war.* The money raised by this means was paid to Philip, who marched his forces back to France. The small and ill-appointed army of Robert would probably now have been overcome, had not affairs in England compelled Rufus to relinquish the contest.

The Welsh had taken advantage of the king's absence to invade the neighbouring counties, and "after their accustomed manner" † carried away the cattle, and plundered and murdered the inhabitants, many of whom they also made prisoners. They laid siege to the castle of Montgomery, and carried it by assault, slaying the whole of the garrison. William marched hastily into Wales, but found it impossible to reach the marauders, who kept to the cover of the woods and marshes, and among the mountains, watching their opportunity to slay any of the English and Norman troops whom they could reach unawares. Rufus pursued them over the hills; but his march was attended with heavy loss to his army, and he was at length compelled to retreat, "not without some note of dishonour."

A second expedition, undertaken in the following summer (1095), met with no better success. It is related that an army was also despatched under the command of the Earl of Shrewsbury and the Earl of Chester, who retook the isle of Anglesey, of which the Welsh had obtained possession. ‡ The inhabitants were maltreated or put to the sword, but having received some reinforcements, a battle ensued, in which the Earl Shrewsbury was slain. The victory, however, was on the side of the Earl of Chester, who remained for some time in Wales, desolating the country.

While the Welsh were yet unsubdued, Rufus received information of a powerful confederacy which had been formed against him in the north of England. The king had reason to suspect some of his nobles of disaffection, and especially Robert Mowbray, Earl of Northumberland, a powerful noble, whose long absence from the court had excited suspicion. A royal proclamation was issued, calling upon every baron in the kingdom to appear at court at the approaching festival of Whitsuntide, on pain of outlawry. The Earl of Northumberland neglected to obey the summons, and the king immediately marched an army to Newcastle, where he surprised some of the earl's accomplices. He next besieged and took the Castle of Tynemouth, and thence proceeded to Bamborough, an impregnable fortress, to which the earl had retreated with his family.



Bamborough Castle.

After various unsuccessful attempts to take this castle by storm, Rufus, who seems to have inherited much of the military talent of his father, adopted another plan of attack. He built a wooden fort, opposite Bamborough, calling it *Malvoisin*; or, "a bad neighbour;" and having placed a garrison, he withdrew the rest of his army. His lieutenants were directed to lie in wait for every opportunity of inflicting damage upon the adherents of Earl Mowbray, or of gaining possession of his person.

One night the Earl quitted his castle with an escort of only thirty horsemen. The object with which he did so is variously stated; but the most probable account is that he was betrayed by some followers of Rufus, who made the offer to give up the town of Newcastle into his possession. The earl was surprised by a body of Norman troops, and while many of his retinue were cut to pieces, he escaped from his assailants, and took sanctuary at St. Oswin's monastery, Tynemouth. By the laws of chivalry, the blackest criminal was safe under the shadow of the cross; but the soldiers of William were neither deterred by those

* Matt. Paris. † Holinshed. ‡ Matt. Paris.

Pope Urban II. Preaching the First Crusade in the Market-place of Clermont. (See page 119.)

laws, nor by any respect for the sacredness of the place. They pursued the earl to his sanctuary, and, after a desperate resistance, made him a prisoner.

Having carried Earl Mowbray to Bamborough, and placed him before the gates of his castle, they demanded a parley with the Countess Matilda. On her appearance, they exhibited her husband as a prisoner, and told her that they would put out his eyes before her face unless she at once gave up the castle into their hands. Matilda is described as having been remarkable for her beauty: she

was young, and had been married to the earl only a few months before. She did not long hesitate; but ordered the gates to be thrown open. Among the followers of Mowbray was one through whom Rufus gained a knowledge of the extent of the conspiracy, and of the persons implicated in it.

The subsequent fate of Mowbray was that of a living death. His young wife had indeed saved him from blindness, but he was not the less deprived of the light of day. Condemned to perpetual imprisonment, he was confined in a dungeon at Windsor Castle, where we read that he dragged on existence for thirty years afterwards.

Among the other conspirators were the Earl of Shrewsbury, William of Alderic, the king's godfather, and William, count of Eu, who was related to Rufus by blood. The first bought exemption from punishment with a large sum of money,—as was a common practice in those days, as well as in later times; William of Alderic was condemned to death; the Count of Eu appealed to the ordeal of battle, or, rather, as his guilt hardly admitted of dispute, proposed to fight for his pardon, against a champion selected by the king. The count was worsted in the encounter, and, by the sentence of the law, was condemned to be barbarously mutilated, after a custom which had been derived from the natives of the East.*

The object of the confederates had been to depose Rufus, and place upon the throne Stephen, count of Aumale, who was the nephew of William the Conqueror. The information which the king had obtained in the castle of Bamborough, enabled him to break up this formidable confederacy, and besides the punishment which we have seen was inflicted upon the leaders, other nobles suffered the confiscation of their estates, and were imprisoned, or effected their escape to Normandy.

The property of the banished nobles was plundered by the adherents of the king, and then left for some time uncultivated and without owners. Nevertheless, the people of the town or hundred in which such estates lay, were compelled to pay the full amount of land tax as before. The royal officers are compared by the chroniclers to thieves; they plundered without mercy both the farmers' barns, and the tradesmen's warehouses. The king, also, forcibly raised troops of men to build a wall encircling the Conqueror's Tower at London, a bridge over the Thames, and near the West Minster a hall, or palace of audiences, for the stated assemblies or assizes of the great barons.† The Saxon chronicle which contains these details, says that "the counties on which these forced labours fell, were grievously tormented: each year passed by heavily and sorrowfully, on account of numberless vexations, and multiplied contributions."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

The Institution of Chivalry—Peter the Hermit—The Council of Clermont.

In the year 1096, Robert determined to join a crusade then about to set out for the Holy Land, and to enable him to do so, he agreed to resign his duchy of Normandy into the hands of Rufus for a sum of £10,000. This transaction is described by the historians as having been a mortgage for three years; but it must have been evident, even to the uncalculating mind of Robert, that he had little chance of regaining possession of his property at the end of that time.

To enable us to understand this extraordinary proceeding on the part of Robert, it will be necessary to examine the causes which led to those expeditions which are called the Crusades. These causes, which had been in operation for hundreds of years before, were two, of very opposite nature; viz., in the East, the spread of Mahomedan power; and in the West, the institution of chivalry, preceded by the introduction of Christianity.

The institution of chivalry had for its object the cultivation of those virtues which may be classed under the word *manhood*, in its best and widest sense. The true knight was supposed to be pious, truthful, and brave; a generous friend, a gallant warrior, a devoted lover. It was necessary for him to add great strength of body, and skill in all manly exercises, to gentleness of manners and culture of mind. Terrible in battle, it was his duty to wield the sword of justice, to strike down the oppressor and the tyrant; but to help the weak, and give his life, if need be, in the cause of the innocent.

The youth who aspired to knighthood began his career as a page in some noble house, where, under the gentle influence of women, he was taught various accomplishments, and imbued with that beautiful, though fantastic dream of honour which he hoped to realise in his future life.

At the age of fourteen the page became an esquire, and was permitted to wear a sword. He now began a regular course of training for arms, and usually sought to attach himself to some knight of fame, whom he attended in hall or field, and supported in battle. The young aspirant was admitted to the honours of knighthood at the age of twenty-one, unless he had previously won his spurs by some gallant feat of arms. This honour was of rare occurrence, as, by the laws of chivalry, the duties of esquire were limited to attendance upon his lord, and he was permitted few opportunities of personal distinction.

The original spirit of chivalry was essentially religious. The initiation into the order of knighthood was a religious ceremony, and usually took place on one of the feasts of the church, as Easter-day, the day of Pentecost, or Christmas-day. The aspirant prepared himself for his new dignity by long vigils, fasts, and prayer; and on the night before the ceremony took place he repaired alone to the church, where he passed the hours in watching beside his armour.

On the day appointed, high mass was performed in the presence of the nobles and bishops and an assembly of the people; and, after the sword of the novice had been consecrated to the service of heaven, he took a solemn vow, according to the laws of chivalry, "to speak the truth, to succour the helpless and oppressed, and never to turn back from an enemy."

The bishop then dubbed him a knight, and the other knights, and often the ladies present, advanced and armed the youth. The spurs were usually buckled on first, and thus came to be regarded as the symbol of knighthood.

Such was the form by which a young man was admitted to the highest dignity of chivalry. Chivalry recognised nothing higher or nobler than the condition of a knight, and the fame of every man was borne by the mouths of minstrels and palmers, not tied to his name by a title.

Various writers have attempted to fix the date at which chivalry first took its rise; but on this point there is no

* Wil. Malms. † Westminster Hall was founded by William Rufus in 1097.

certain information. Probably the idea of chivalry was the growth of centuries, and made its way gradually through the corruptions of the times in which it was born. Whatever may have been its origin, the institution was in its infancy in the tenth and eleventh centuries, and received no marked development until the time of the first crusade. The stories of King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table * are probably as fabulous as the wonders of Merlin, or the tales of the Arabian Nights. In the days of Charlemagne, chivalry, in the general sense of the word, was yet unborn; and though in the time of Alfred its spirit undoubtedly existed in our own country, it had yet assumed no name or distinctive form.

According to Tacitus, customs bearing a resemblance to those of chivalry existed in his day among the German nations. On the fall of Rome, these tribes subdued and colonised the country now called France, and it is probable that they planted there the germ of the institution of chivalry. The first traces of its existence in France appear soon after the time of Charlemagne. It originated with a few knights, who endeavoured to introduce among their licentious companions a love of virtue and honour. However small may have been the early success of their efforts, the principle of chivalry to which they gave expression shines like a star in those dark ages.

The laws of chivalry gradually became recognised and enforced, and were submitted to by every man who desired to win either the smiles of women or honourable fame among men. Refined and mystical as were the doctrines of chivalry, its laws were practical and severe, demanding mortification and self-denial. In later times the simple and austere habits of the knights were exchanged for luxury and licentiousness, and the spirit of chivalry decayed with the growth of those arts of life which conduce to ease and refinement.

Towards the end of the eleventh century, the attention of Europe was attracted to the state of affairs in the Holy Land, and chivalry, which had hitherto been rather a name than a reality, received from this cause a sudden and powerful impulse.

From the period of the destruction of the second temple, the history of Jerusalem had been a record of strife and bloodshed. During the early occupation of the city by the Romans, the holy places were profaned by pagan rites, and the spots venerated alike by Jew and Christian became the scene of sacrifices to heathen deities.

In the fourth century, when Rome herself acknowledged the doctrines of Christianity, churches were erected on the ruins of the temples of Venus and Jove, and Jerusalem was once more regarded as the seat of the true faith. When Mahomet appeared and spread his new doctrines throughout the East, the aspect of affairs was once more changed, and the Holy City fell into the hands of the Arabians. In the year 969, the dominion of the caliphs of Egypt was established over the whole of Palestine.

In the following century a multitude of rude and savage Turkmans from the shores of the Caspian Sea, invaded the lands of the people of the south. These Tartar hordes, called in history the Seljuk Turks, gradually extended their conquests, and between the years 1038 and 1092, obtained possession of Persia, Arabia, and the greater part of Syria. The invaders embraced the religion of Mahomet, and in many cases a fusion took place between them and the conquered nations. After various vicissitudes, Jerusalem, in the year 1094, was in the hands of the Turkish supporters of the Caliph of Cairo.

In every age the Holy Land had been held in the highest veneration by the Christian nations. Pilgrims proceeded thither from the most distant parts of Europe, in the faith that the long and toilsome journey would be rewarded by an expiation of their sins. With unwavering faith in the protection of heaven, the pilgrim set out on foot to traverse inhospitable wastes, cross rivers and seas, and make his way through unknown regions to the land of promise. Dressed in the costume mentioned in the Bible, and carrying with him only a staff in his hand and a scrip at his side, he trusted entirely to charity for his support. Wherever the Christian religion prevailed among the people, that charity was not withheld; his character was held in veneration, and food and lodging were provided for him as a religious duty. At rare intervals along his way, he came to a hospital or almshouse, built for the reception of pilgrims by some Christian prince. On his return he placed in the church of his native town the branch of the sacred

Roman Medal representing the Palm-tree of Judea.

palm tree* (which he had brought from Jerusalem) in proof of the accomplishment of his vow.

During the time that Palestine remained under Christian rule, these pilgrimages were performed without much danger, and devotees from all parts of Europe flocked to the Holy City. The coffers of the church were enriched by the sale of relics, which each traveller eagerly desired to possess.

Under the sway of the Caliphs the pilgrimages continued, but the Christians were treated with indignity by the Turks, and various persecutions took place. In the tenth century a belief was entertained that the end of the world was at hand, and people of all classes hurried to Jerusalem in hope of a purification from their sins. In the eleventh century, the persecutions of the Christians increased, and their condition became wretched in the extreme. They were, indeed, tolerated in the Holy City on payment of a tribute of two pieces of gold yearly, but their religious ceremonies were prohibited, their property frequently plundered, and the honour of their daughters violated.

Since the fourth century it was generally believed that the very cross on which Christ suffered had been discovered at Jerusalem. This belief afforded an additional stimulus to the piety of devotees, and a piece of the sacred wood was

* "Morte Arthur" was a French. romance, translated by Sir Thomas Mallory, Knight, and printed by Caxton, A.D. 1481.

* Old chroniclers speak of pilgrims returning from the Holy Land with their staffs wreathed with palm; and from this custom arose the word palmer, which signified a holy traveller to Jerusalem.

regarded as of inestimable value. Pilgrims, therefore, still made their way to Jerusalem, but were not permitted to enter the city except on payment of a piece of gold —a large sum at that day. Very few of the pilgrims

to place Guibert, a pope of his own election, upon the throne Urban was also embroiled with Philip I., of France, in consequence of the adulterous intercourse held by that prince with Bertrade, in defiance of the pontifical authority.

St. Helena Discovering the True Cross.—From a Greek Manuscript of the Ninth Century, in the Imperial Library of Paris.

possessed enough to satisfy this demand, and they were driven from the gates, with their long deferred hope turned to utter despair. Many of them died from famine before the walls of the city; many more fell by the road-side, as they pursued their weary journey homewards; and but a few survived to tell the tale to Europe, and to kindle the flame which was soon to burn up with fury.

The Christian emperors of the East are reported to have sent letters from time to time to the princes of Europe, detailing the sufferings of the Christians in Judea, and soliciting assistance. These appeals, together with the accounts of Turkish cruelties given by the returned pilgrims, caused a feeling of deep indignation throughout Europe, and aroused the spirit of chivalry.

At this time there appeared on the scene a remarkable man, who is known to posterity by the name of Peter the Hermit, from his being usually clad in weeds. In his youth he had been a soldier, and had been married, but subsequently he became a priest. He is described as having been small and mean in person, but with eyes powerful in expression, and an eloquent voice. He had long been noted for the austerity of his life, and it is said of him that he found pleasure in the greatest abstinence.

This man formed the determination of visiting Jerusalem, and having performed the journey in safety, he paid the piece of gold demanded, and was admitted into the city. Here he was a witness of the cruelties perpetrated upon the Christians, and was seized with horror and indignation at the sight. He held a conference with the Greek patriarch, who, at the suggestion of Peter, determined to write to the pope, and the princes of the West, describing the misery of the Christians, and praying for protection.

Furnished with his credentials, Peter returned to Italy and laid his complaint before Urban II. The pope was then engaged in a dispute with Henry IV., emperor of Germany, who was endeavouring to depose Urban, and The pope had been compelled to seek the protection of Robert Guiscard, a powerful freebooter, who set the majesty of France and Germany at defiance. There Peter sought the pope, and in the presence of Bohemond, Prince of Tarentum, the gallant son of Robert, the first council was held, which resulted in the preaching of the crusade.

The tale told by the hermit was received with the deepest attention, and the pope warmly espoused his cause. Urban gave his authority to the scheme of the crusade, and with the promise of his active co-operation, Peter set out to preach the delivery of the Holy Land throughout Europe.

The story of his progress is told by various writers of that age—"He set out," says Guibert Nogent, "from whence I know not, nor with what design; but we saw him at that time passing through the towns and villages, preaching everywhere, and the people surrounding him in crowds, loading him with presents, and celebrating his sanctity with such high eulogiums, that I never remember to have seen such honours paid to any other person. He showed himself very generous, however, in the distribution of the things given to him. He brought back to their homes the women that had abandoned their husbands, not without adding gifts of his own, and re-established peace between those who lived unhappily, with wonderful authority. In everything he said or did, it seemed as if there was something divine; so much so, that people went to pluck some of the hairs from his mule, which they kept afterwards as relics; which I mention here, not that they really were so, but only served to satisfy the public love of anything extraordinary. While out of doors, he wore a woollen tunic with a brown mantle, which fell down to his heels. He had his arms and his feet bare, ate little or no bread and lived upon fish and wine."

Such was the appearance of the man whose eloquence drew after him the whole of Europe. The records of history afford no other instance of events so stupendous, arising

from a cause apparently so insignificant. The position of Peter, however, is not to be measured by his woollen garb and low estate. The fame of the anchorite had gone before him; he carried with him the pope's authority; he was a palmer from Jerusalem, who had himself seen the things he described. The age was enthusiastic, and religious sentiment, as well as knightly ambition, was enlisted in the cause which he preached.

While Peter journeyed on from city to city, Urban called together a council at Placentia, at which deputies were present from the Emperor of Constantinople. The council being unanimous in favour of the crusade, Urban determined to venture across the Alps. A second council was held at Clermont, in Auvergne, at which were assembled bishops and princes, both of France and Germany, and a vast concourse of people.

After the less important business of the meeting had been transacted, Urban came forth from the church in which the council was held, and addressed the multitude gathered in one of the great squares. He recounted the long catalogue of wrongs suffered by the Christians in the Holy Land from the pagan* race. With an eloquence for which he was remarkable, he appealed to the most powerful passions which animate the breast of mankind; and the assembly rose up and cried with one voice—"It is the will of God, it is the will of God."

The news of this council spread with wonderful rapidity over the world; and, in the words of an old historian, "throughout the earth the Christians glorified themselves and were filled with joy; while the Gentiles of Arabia and Persia trembled and were seized with sadness: the souls of the one race were exalted, those of the others stricken with fear and stupor."

Some modern historians, in speaking of the influence possessed by Urban over the people, have reproached his memory for the use to which he applied his eloquence, and for having incited the people to the wild and blood-thirsty expeditions of the crusades, with a view to his own interest. Such an accusation cannot be regarded as just. It is the part of wisdom, as of charity, to judge of a man's acts, not by a standard of pure and abstract right, but rather with regard to the times in which he lived and the influences by which he was surrounded. The spirit of the age was warlike and enthusiastic, and such a spirit may be traced through the conduct of Pope Urban; but there is no reason to doubt that he was sincere, and that he upheld the cause of the crusades at the cost of great personal sacrifices.

CHAPTER XXXV.

The First Crusade—The Byzantine Empire—Siege and Capture of Jerusalem.

At the council of Clermont an universal peace was proclaimed, called the *Truce of God*, and its observance was some time afterwards sworn throughout the country. Europe had long been in a disturbed condition; the weak were liable to be plundered by the strong without redress; and wars and feuds between rival princes were continued with little intermission. It is related that at the truce of God, these evils disappeared, and for a short time there was a profound peace.

Thieves and murderers—criminals of every dye, were tempted by the prospect of boundless licence, and joined the crusade. Every man wore the sign of the cross upon his shoulder, cut in red cloth, and many adventurers assumed that sacred emblem in the belief that it would afford a perpetual absolution for any crime they might commit. But while preparing for the departure of the various expeditions, the crusaders—even those of the most reckless character—abstained for a while from violence, and kept the truce of God. This cessation of civil warfare must have endured some time, for among the wild spirits who joined the first body of the crusade, few, if any, lived to return, and the removal of so many plunderers and marauders must have produced a beneficial effect on the state of society in Europe.

People of every degree and of various nations were animated with the same ardent enthusiasm. Nobles sold or mortgaged their lands to raise money for the enterprise; poor men abandoned their homesteads and their families, and flocked to the standard of the cross. The old writers describe the sufferings occasioned by the parting of husbands from their wives, parents from their children. They tell us, however, of exceptions to these scenes of misery. Some wives and mothers there were who, in their fanatic zeal, animated their husbands to the journey, and parted from them without a tear.

In the year 1096, the first body of the crusaders set out for the Holy Land under the command of *Gautier sans avoir*, or Walter the Penniless, a nobleman of Burgundy. This man was a soldier of fortune, noted for his poverty, but also possessed of some degree of military fame. The army which he led was a mixed rabble without order or discipline, who committed many excesses, and plundered the towns and villages which lay on their road.

Passing through Germany, Walter entered Hungary, which country had become converted to Christianity several centuries before. Among the marshes and passes of this country his followers must have perished, if they had not been received with kindness and hospitality by the king and people, who respected the objects of the crusade.

At Semlin some stragglers of Walter's army were attacked and plundered by a portion of the inhabitants, and the arms and crosses of the men who had thus been despoiled were placed as trophies upon the walls of the city. The crusaders called for vengeance; but Walter restrained their impetuosity, and passed on into Bulgaria. Here he found himself among a nation altogether hostile; the gates of the cities were shut against him, and his troops were unable to obtain food. Urged by hunger, they seized the flocks and herds of the natives, who attacked the invaders, and defeated them with great slaughter. Walter succeeded with great difficulty in collecting the remnant of his scattered multitude, and led them on the way to Constantinople. Here, after many privations, he at length arrived, and obtained permission from the emperor to await the arrival of Peter the Hermit.

Meanwhile there advanced over the plains of Germany, a wild disorganised multitude of all nations and languages. Men, women, and children were there; for women had at length been impelled by the fatal enthusiasm of the time, or by some equally powerful motive, to throw off the timidity of their sex, and to share the dangers of their husbands and their sons. Infants of tender age accompanied their

* The word Paynim, or Pagan, was commonly used in the middle ages to include all Mahomedans.

parents, and the old and infirm dragged their weary steps in the rear.*

At the head of this multitude, which numbered forty thousand persons, rode Peter the Hermit, pointing, with outstretched arms, the way to Jerusalem. The march to the southern part of Hungary was conducted without much disturbance or violence; but when the crusaders arrived before Semlin, their anger was roused by the sight of the arms and crosses of Walter's followers, displayed in triumph on the walls. A furious assault was made on the town, which was taken by the troops of the cross, and 7,000 Hungarians were killed or made prisoners. Then Peter learnt, for the first time, that the passions which had been excited by his eloquence defied the control of the same power, and that he was utterly without authority in the midst of his reckless followers. For several days the captured city was the scene of every kind of licentiousness, and neither the property of the inhabitants nor the honour of the women was spared by the conquering troops.

The news of the fall of Semlin being conveyed to Carloman, king of Hungary, he immediately marched a large force to the southern frontier. Peter retreated before the Hungarian army, and effected the passage of the Save with considerable loss, a party of native Bulgarian troops having advanced to oppose him.

The hermit now led his army in the direction of Nissa, which was occupied by the duke of Bulgaria with a considerable force. With a prudence which in their case was exceptional, the crusaders here abstained from any attempt at violence, and the duke in return permitted his subjects to supply them with necessaries. These peaceful relations were maintained until the moment of departure of the hermit's army, when some German stragglers, who had engaged in a dispute with some Bulgarian merchants, set fire to several dwellings and warehouses without the walls of the town.

Aroused to vengeance, the troops of the garrison rushed out upon the rear of Peter's army, and put to the sword indiscriminately all who opposed them, carrying off many women and children as prisoners.

Peter turned back, and with a degree of calmness and wisdom which does honour to his memory, he inquired into the causes of the conflict which he saw raging around. He negotiated successfully with the duke, and peace was on the point of being restored, when a portion of the hermit's undisciplined army made an attack upon the city, and were repulsed with heavy loss. The conflict then became general, and resulted in the total defeat of the crusading troops.

The Army of Peter the Hermit.

Peter himself escaped with difficulty, and took refuge among the mountains. For many days he wandered about alone, oppressed with grief for the fate of the expedition, and despairing of the future. At length he met with some of his knights, who retained more courage and energy than their leader; and, with their assistance, a portion of the scattered forces of the cross was gathered together. Peter once more placed himself at the head of the troops, and, with renewed vigour, hastened on towards Constantinople.

At every step the hermit received reinforcements from the fugitive bands of his followers; and the news of his approach having reached Constantinople, the emperor Alexius sent deputies to meet the crusaders, and to assist them in procuring provisions. At Philippopoli Peter

* "Who shall count," says Guibert of Nogent, "the children and the infirm, the old men and young maidens, who pressed forward to the fight, not with the hope of aiding, but for the sake of the crown of martyrdom to be won from the swords of the infidel?"

addressed an eloquent appeal to the people, which was attended with such success that the wants of the army were abundantly supplied.

After reposing for awhile from the fatigues and privations they had undergone, the crusaders, now numbering nearly thirty thousand men, set out for Constantinople. The thirst for plunder, also, was not restrained by any gratitude for the hospitality of the emperor. Alexius had sent both money and provisions in abundance to the camp of the crusaders, who, nevertheless, seized whatever booty came within their reach; entering dwelling-houses and palaces, and even stripping the lead from the roofs of the

Bird's-eye View of Christian Constantinople.—From an Engraving in the *Imperium Orientale* of Anselmi Banduri.—Paris, 1711.

Here they at length arrived, and effected a junction with the troops of Walter the Penniless.

The discordant elements, of which these combined forces were composed, soon appeared in a defiance of all authority, and between the various nations a spirit of animosity arose, which found vent in repeated quarrels and disturbances. churches, and selling it to the people from whom it had been stolen.

These lawless acts continuing on the increase, the emperor found means to convey his dangerous allies across the Bosphorus, advising them not to quit their new encampment till the arrival of other divisions of the crusade. The

troops, however, continued their ravages throughout Bithynia; a stronger hand than that of a palmer was necessary to control them, and Peter, wearied with the sight of excesses which he was unable to prevent, proceeded to Constantinople for the purpose of holding a council with the emperor.

During his absence the Lombards and Germans separated from the French, and chose for their leader a man named Renault or Rinaldo. Under his command they resumed their march, and took possession of the fortress of Xerigord. Here they were attacked by Sultan Soliman, who cut to pieces a detachment placed in ambuscade, and then invested the fortress.

The besieged possessed no supply of water within the walls, and they endured the most dreadful agonies from thirst. At the end of eight days, the leader, Rinaldo, with his chief companions, went over to the Turks, and betrayed the fortress into their hands. The remainder of the garrison were put to death without mercy.

The news of this disaster reached the French camp, and with it came a false report of the fall of Nice. The troops demanded to be led towards the Turkish territory, and Walter the Penniless, having in vain attempted to restrain their impatience, placed himself at their head. Before the army had advanced many leagues into the country, it was encountered by the Turks, who attacked the crusaders in overwhelming numbers. An obstinate resistance only served to make the carnage more complete. Walter himself, after performing many feats of valour, fell covered with wounds, and the Christian army was routed so completely, that only three thousand men escaped the sword.

The fugitives entrenched themselves at Civitot, where they were again attacked by a large force. The Turks surrounded the fortress with piles of wood, with the intention of destroying the garrison by fire, but the crusaders, seizing a moment when the wind blew towards the Turkish camp, set fire to the wood themselves, and many of their enemies perished in the flames.

Meanwhile a soldier had made his escape from the town, and having reached Constantinople, told the news of these disasters to Peter the Hermit. At the prayer of Peter, the Emperor Alexius sent forces to rescue the garrison of Civitot, and the remnant of the army of the Cross was brought in safety to Constantinople, On their arrival, however, Alexius commanded them to disperse and return to their own country, and he bought from each man his arms; thus at once depriving him of the means of violence, and supplying him with money for the journey.

This policy on the part of the emperor has given rise to an accusation against him of having betrayed the cause of the Cross, and entered into an alliance with the Turks. No such motive is necessary to account for the conduct of Alexius. He would necessarily be glad to purge his dominions from a number of lawless vagabonds, who committed every species of iniquity under the name of a holy cause, and who, as his allies, were more to be dreaded than the Turks, his enemies.

While the expedition of Peter the Hermit thus came to an end, other bands of fanatics and adventurers were following on his steps, without being destined to reach so far as Constantinople. The accounts of these expeditions are necessarily obscure; but the information we possess on the subject is not of a kind to induce a desire for further details. It is related that a multitude of two hundred thousand persons, without even a nominal leader, passed through Germany towards the south of Europe. Their course was marked by excesses of every kind; men and women lived in a state of debauchery, and indulged in drunken orgies, obtaining supplies by plundering the surrounding country. Every Jew who fell into their hands was put to death, and the fanatic multitude declared it to be the will of Heaven that they should exterminate the nation who had rejected the Saviour.

A terrible retribution, however, was at hand, and the sacred emblem of the Cross was purified from the stains with which it had been covered by the perpetrators of these enormities. At Mersburg, a large Hungarian force, opposed the advancing multitude, who attacked that city with fury. A breach had been made in the walls, and the fall of Mersburg seemed inevitable, when some strange and sudden terror, which has never been accounted for, seized the besieging army, and they gave up the attack and fled in dismay over the country. The Hungarians pursued them on every side, and mowed them down by hundreds. Day after day the work of slaughter went on, until the fields were strewed with corpses and the Danube was red with blood.

Such was the fate of the first bands of crusaders who set out towards the Holy Land. More than a quarter of a million persons had already perished by famine or disease, or by the swords of the Turks or Hungarians, whose vengeance they had excited by acts of violence and plunder.

Meanwhile many powerful princes of the West were occupied in collecting troops and preparing to take the field. Among these were Godfrey of Bouillon, duke of Loraine; Hugh, count of Vermandois, and brother of Philip, king of France; Robert, duke of Normandy; Bohemond, prince of Tarentum; Robert, count of Flanders, and Raimond, count of Toulouse; each of whom conducted an army towards Constantinople.

Among the leaders of the first crusade, the most distinguished name is that of Godfrey VI., lord of Bouillon marquis of Anvers, and duke of Brabant. Inferior in political power to some of his companions, he was superior to them all in that influence which depends upon personal character. Although still young in years, he had earned fame in many a well-fought field; and his name was known throughout Europe, in connection with many acts of private virtue no less than with gallant feats of arms. Amidst the cruelty and licentiousness so commonly attributed to the men of that age, the character of Godfrey is presented to us almost without blemish; and if we make a certain reservation for the partiality of monkish chroniclers towards the great leader of the crusade, there will still remain evidence of facts which entitle the memory of the lord of Bouillon to the highest honour with posterity.

Robert the monk, one of his contemporaries, who was present at the siege of Jerusalem, speaks of Godfrey in the following terms:—"He was of beautiful countenance, tall of stature, agreeable in his discourse, of excellent morals, and at the same time so gentle that he seemed better fitted for the monk than for the knight; but when his enemies appeared before him, and the combat was at hand, his soul became filled with a mighty daring: like a lion he feared not for his own person, and what

shield, what buckler, could withstand the fall of his sword?"

Long before the crusade had been preached at Clermont, Godfrey had heard the tales of the sufferings of the Christians in Palestine, and had said that he desired to travel to Jerusalem, not with scrip and staff, but with spear and shield. At the time when the standard of the cross was raised throughout Europe, he was suffering from a slow fever, but "immediately he shook disease from his limbs, and rising, as it were, with expanded breast, from years of decrepitude, he shone with renovated vigour." * In order to furnish money for the expedition he had undertaken, he sold to the Church of Liege his beautiful domain and castle of Bouillon; and the standard which he raised was joined by his brother Baldwin, his relation Baldwin de Bourg, and many other knights of fame.

The army of Godfrey commenced its march from the Moselle in August, 1096, and followed the course previously taken by Peter the Hermit. The order and moderation which marked the conduct of the disciplined troops of Godfrey was as remarkable as the violence and excesses committed by the rabble which had preceded them. The march was conducted peaceably, and without incident, to the frontiers of Hungary, where the army came in sight of the unburied corpses of the multitude slain near Mersburg.

Godfrey called a halt, and proceeded to investigate the causes of the spectacle which lay before him. He wrote a firm but temperate letter to the king of Hungary, de-

Statue of Godfrey of Bouillon at Brussels.

* Wil. Malms.

manding an account of the carnage, and Carloman sent envoys with a reply which proved satisfactory. An interview subsequently took place between the duke and the king, at the fortress of Posen. Godfrey went towards this place accompanied by an escort of three hundred knights and conversed with the Hungarian monarch on the reconciliation of the Christians. The rights of hospitality, which were respected among the most savage nations, were also enforced by the laws of chivalry; and, therefore, at the invitation of Carloman, Godfrey dismissed his retinue without hesitation, and, accompanied by a few of his knights, entered the capital.

The king entertained his guests with various festivities, and an agreement was effected that the army of the Cross should pass freely from the north to the south of Hungary, that they should purchase provisions from the inhabitants, and that Baldwin should remain with the king as a hostage for the good conduct of the Franks. Baldwin—whose character bore no resemblance to that of his brother—objected to this arrangement, but Godfrey declared indignantly that he himself would be the hostage, if the other persisted in his refusal. Thus reduced to the alternative of compliance or a loss of honour, Baldwin entered the city with his family, and was received by the king and the people with the greatest hospitality.

The hostages were released on the banks of the Save, near Semlin, and the crusaders continued their march through Bulgaria and Thrace to Philippopoli, where they reposed themselves. Deputies arrived from the Emperor Alexius, and with their assistance the army was supplied with the necessary provision.

While Godfrey was pursuing his course through Hungary, another body of crusaders, headed by Hugh, count of Vermandois, were proceeding towards Constantinople by way of Italy. Joined to this expedition, though probably not marching in the same body, were the troops of Robert, duke of Normandy, and Stephen, count of Blois.

Robert of Normandy was not altogether destitute of chivalrous qualities; and, therefore, it is no matter for surprise that this man, whose reckless and licentious character was notorious, should take up the cause of the Cross. The most irreligious men are often superstitious. The crusade was a pilgrimage, with all the pomp of war, and the temptation of earthly aggrandisement was mingled with the hope of a recompense beyond the grave. Fame in this world and happiness in the next were the prizes for which the nobles forsook their feasts and dances, and the poor their homes and their children.

Robert was eloquent in speech, and, when his indolence was overcome, skilful and energetic in action; but his deeds were the result of impulse rather than of principle, and were unrestrained by prudence or good sense. He, however, possessed the popular virtue of lavish generosity, and large bands of troops, both Norman and English, attached themselves to his standard. Several independent lords also accompanied him, among whom were Eustace of Boulogne, Stephen, earl of Albemarle, and Odo, the bishop of Bayeux.

The army of Hugh of Vermandois crossed the Alps with the intention of proceeding by sea to the Holy Land. The old chroniclers describe in glowing terms the brilliant appearance of the troops—the splendour of their equipments—the multitude of knights with shining armour, and of banners glistening in the sun. Such a sight had never before been seen in Europe, and it seemed as though this gorgeous array had been destined for pleasure rather than for war.

Robert of Normandy and Stephen of Chartres dispersed their forces among the towns of Barri and Otranto, and passed the autumn in gaiety and dissipation. Hugh of Vermandois, however, determined to embark without delay, and he wrote to the Emperor Alexius demanding haughtily that preparations should be made for his reception.

The position of affairs at Constantinople had changed considerably since the emperor had applied to the princes of the West for assistance against the infidel. The power of the Seljuk chiefs at Rhoum was declining, and no longer threatened the safety of the Greek capital; while their rule in Asia Minor was become familiar to the people, and had ceased to be regarded as a disgrace.

The attentions which Godfrey had received from the emperor were, probably, due to the respect inspired by the character of the lord of Loraine, rather than to motives of policy; and when Alexius heard of the vast extent of the force which was advancing towards his capital, he became suspicious, and determined to seize every opportunity of weakening a power which might be attended with danger to himself.

The first act of hostility on the part of the emperor appeared in a command issued to the navy in the Adriatic to prevent the Latin fleet from quitting the Italian ports, and to take prisoners any of the crusaders who might arrive on the coast.

The vessels of the count of Vermandois were scattered in a storm, and Hugh himself, having landed at Durazzo, was detained in captivity, and sent to Constantinople. Here he was received with great civility by Alexius, who exerted himself by flatteries and attentions to gain the good will of his prisoner.

The news of the imprisonment of Hugh reached the army stationed at Philippopoli, and Godfrey sent messengers to the emperor, demanding that the count of Vermandois should be immediately liberated.

Alexius refused to comply with the request, and Godfrey commenced hostilities by giving up to pillage the beautiful province of Thrace. This course of action had its effect, and the emperor found himself compelled to liberate the prisoners. Godfrey then, at once, repressed further acts of violence among his soldiers, and marched peaceably to Constantinople, where he arrived two days before Christmas.

The count of Vermandois advanced from the city to meet his friend, and at that moment a messenger from the emperor approached Godfrey and invited him to visit the palace. The lord of Bouillon, however, had been warned against the treachery probably intended by Alexius, and, therefore, refused to enter the walls. The inhabitants of the city were then prohibited from traffic with the crusaders, and the army of Godfrey laid waste the surrounding country. During the festival of Christmas these offensive measures were suspended, and at the end of that time the emperor recalled his edict.

Once more Alexius sent deputies to induce Godfrey to enter the city, and his refusal was followed by a second prohibition of traffic, and by further acts of retaliation on the part of the crusaders. A body of troops then issued

from the town, and attacked the camp of the Latins. The Greeks from the walls hurled darts and shot arrows upon the soldiers below, but the crusaders, who were protected by their coats of mail, inflicted great damage upon their assailants before night closed in and put an end to the combat. Alexius was compelled, by the sufferings of his people, to give up all thoughts of hostile measures, and traffic and intercourse was resumed between the inhabitants and the army of the Cross. Hugh of Vermandois, upon whom the blandishments of Alexius had produced their impression, exerted himself to establish a peace, and to prevail upon Godfrey to take the oath of fealty to the emperor.

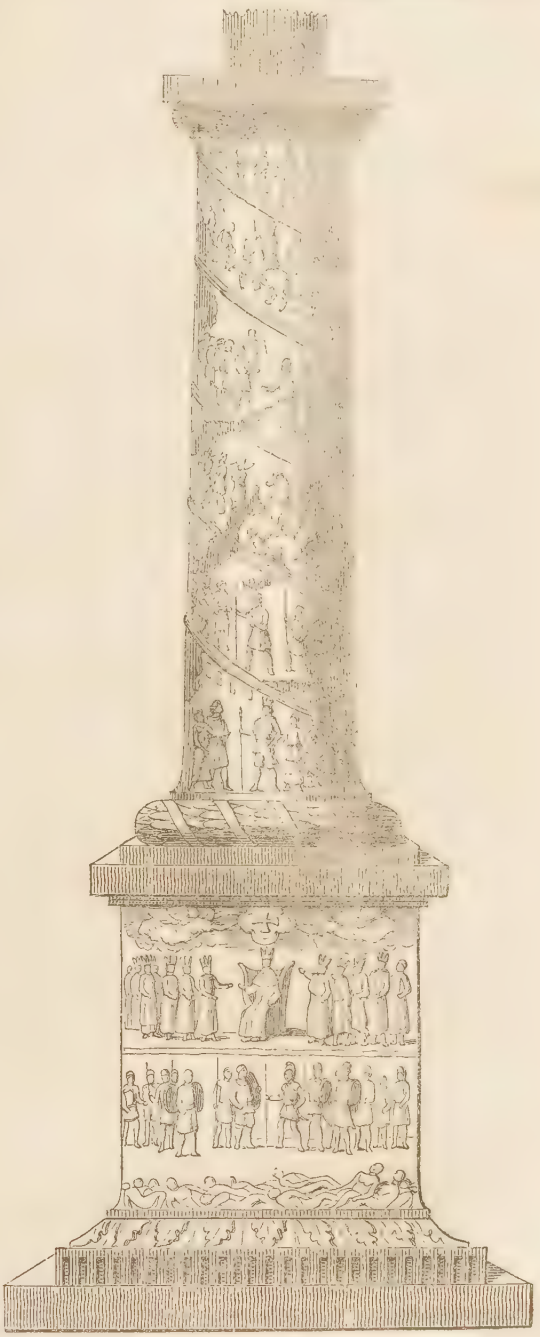
The lord of Loraine at first refused to bend the knee before this treacherous prince, but at length the arguments of Hugh produced their effect, and a son of Alexius having been sent to the Latin camp as a hostage, Godfrey entered Constantinople with his friends.

Since the conversion of the Emperor Constantine to Christianity (A.D. 323), a city of spacious squares, gorgeous palaces, and churches had been gradually growing up upon the site of the little town of Byzantium. This place was selected by Constantine as the seat of his empire, and the removal may be regarded as one of the causes which hastened the fall of Rome. After the death of Constantine, the vast empire over which his sway had extended was separated into distinct sovereignties for his sons and nephews. That portion of the Roman territory of which Constantinople was the capital gradually acquired strength and importance, and became an empire which has since been known as the *Greek*, the *Eastern*, or the *Byzantine* empire.

Of those splendours of the Byzantine court which had exerted so marked an influence upon the mind of the count of Vermandois, and were now employed to dazzle the eyes of his companions in arms, we have full records in the writings of that period. Benjamin of Tudela, a Spanish Jew, who travelled through the East in the twelfth century (A.D. 1159 or 1160), has given a description of what he saw at Constantinople, and speaks in glowing terms of the magnificence of the buildings and the wealth and luxury of the inhabitants.

"The king Emanuel,"* says he, "has built a grand palace for the throne or the seat of his empire, on the borders of the sea, in addition to those which were built by his ancestors. In this palace the columns and their capitals are covered with pure gold and silver, and he has caused to be graven on them all the wars which he and his ancestors have made.† There also has been erected a throne of gold and precious stones, above which hangs, by a golden chain, a crown of gold, which comes exactly upon his head when he is seated. In this crown are stones of such great price as cannot be estimated. In the night there is no need of candles, for every one is able to see by the sparkling of these jewels. There are also many other wonders, which no man could recount.

"Thither are carried every year the tributes of all Greece, whose castles are filled with dresses of silk, of purple, and gold. Nowhere else in the world do we see such buildings and such great riches. It is said that the



Marble Column raised by Arcadius, at Constantinople, in honour of his Father, Theodosius the Great.

tribute of Constantinople alone amounts to twenty thousand pieces of gold a-day,* derived from imposts upon the shops, markets, and taverns, as well as that paid by merchants who repair thither from all quarters, both by land and sea. The Greek inhabitants of the country are very rich in gold and jewels. They go about in dresses of silk, fringed with gold and embroidery; to see them in this attire, mounted

* Manuel Comnenus.

† The traveller here seems to be describing some confused recollection of the column of Arcadius.

* Having a regard to the value of money at that period, there can be no doubt that this account is exaggerated.

on their horses, one would say that they are like the sons of kings."*

In spite of the luxury which prevailed, the subjects of the Byzantine empire were the most dextrous and laborious of nations. Their country was blessed by nature with every advantage of soil, climate, and situation, and in the support and restoration of the arts, their patient and peaceful temper produced results which were not to be attained amidst the warlike spirit and feudal anarchy of Europe. In the preparation of those costly dresses described by the Jewish traveller, the colours most in use were the Tyrian purple, the brilliant scarlet, and the softer lustre of the green. These colours were also used to adorn the buildings.

"There is also at Constantinople" (continues Benjamin of Tudela) "the temple of St. Sophia, and the pope of the Greeks, who are not subject to the pope of Rome. You may count as many altars in the temple of St. Sophia as there are days in the year. Thither are gathered immense riches from the isles, country houses, and towns of the country. There is no temple in the universe where we find such riches as are there. In the midst of this temple there are columns of gold and silver, and chandeliers of the same metals, in such numbers, that we cannot count them."

Throne of the Emperor of Constantinople.—From a Greek MS. of the Ninth Century, in the Imperial Library at Paris.

A church dedicated to the Divine Wisdom (Santa Sophia) was built by Constantine, in the twentieth year of his reign. This building was burnt down in the year 404, and having been rebuilt by Theodosius, was again destroyed by

* Speaking of the Peloponnesus, a province, or *theme*, of the Byzantine monarchy, Gibbon says that the embroidery there produced was raised either in silk or gold; and the more simple ornament of stripes or circles was surpassed by the nicer imitation of flowers The vestments that were fashioned for the palace or the altar often glittered with precious stones, and the figures were delineated in strings of oriental pearls. Until the twelfth century, Greece alone, of all the countries of Christendom, possessed the silkworm.—*Decline and Fall*, chap. liii.

fire. The vast pile, which still remains one of the chief ornaments of Constantinople, and which is now used as a Mahommedan mosque, dates from the reign of Justinian. That magnificent prince determined to build "the grandest monument ever erected by the hand of man." Seven years were occupied in collecting materials from every part of the world, and nine were employed in the actual building. Columns of marble from the temples of the sun at Palmyra, and that of Diana at Ephesus; bricks of perfect form and remarkable durability, from the island of Rhodes, were brought at immense cost to complete the edifice. Gold and mosaics were spread over the surface paintings on gold and costly marbles covered the walls.

magic arts, before the king and queen, figures of all kinds of men that exist in the world; thither also are taken lions, bears, tigers, and wild asses, which are made to fight together, as well as birds. There is no such a sight to be seen in all the world."*

According to Gibbon, the great palace, the centre of the imperial residence, was situated between the hippodrome and the church of St. Sophia, and the gardens descended by many a terrace to the shores of the Propontis. The new palace, erected in the tenth century by the Emperor Theophilus, was accompanied with five churches, one of which was conspicuous for size and beauty. The square before the portico of the church contained a fountain, the

Santa Sophia.

The church of St. Sophia, which once contained so many splendours, now retains within it but few traces of its former glory. The imposing proportions of the building still remain, but the walls are bare, and upon the dome the crescent has replaced the cross.

The narrative of Benjamin of Tudela goes on to describe "a place where the king diverts himself, called the hippodrome, near to the wall of the palace.* There it is that every year, on the day of the birth of Jesus the Nazarene, the king gives a grand entertainment. There are represented by

basin of which was lined and encompassed with plates of silver. In the beginning of each season the basin, instead of water, was replenished with the most exquisite fruits, which were abandoned to the populace for the entertainment of the prince. He enjoyed this tumultuous spectacle from a throne resplendent with gold and gems, which was raised by a marble staircase to the height of a lofty terrace. Below the throne were seated the officers of the guards, the magistrates, and the chiefs of the factions of the circus;

* Now called *At-Meidan*, or horse market.

* It is possible that Benjamin was a witness of the festivals celebrated at Constantinople on the occasion of the marriage of the Emperor Manuel with Mary, daughter of the Prince of Antioch, on Christmas day, 1161.

Circus and Hippodrome of Ancient Constantinople.—From an Engraving in the *Imperium Orientale.*

the inferior steps were occupied by the people; the space below was covered with troops of singers, dancers, and pantomimists. The fanciful magnificence of the emperor employed, in various fantastic designs, the skill and patience of such artists as the times could afford; but the taste of Athens would have despised their frivolous and costly labours: a golden tree with its leaves and branches, which sheltered a multitude of birds warbling their artificial notes, and two lions of massy gold, and of the natural size, which looked and roared like their brethren of the forest.

Such were the scenes of magnificence which were presented to the view of Godfrey and his companions as they entered the Greek capital. The emperor received the great leader of the crusade with the highest distinction, clothed him with imperial robes, and called him his son.* The character of Godfrey is shown to us in so high and noble an aspect, that it is not probable he was much affected by these flatteries; but whatever may have been his motives, he consented to do homage to the emperor, according to the feudal laws of France.

Alexius now made costly presents to the crusaders, and gave them honourable conduct from the city. After having refreshed themselves for several days, the army passed the Hellespont and encamped at Chalcedon, there to await the other divisions of the crusade.

Soon after the departure of Godfrey from Loraine, Bohemond, prince of Tarentum, and his relation Tancred, had quitted Italy with an immense body of troops, including ten thousand horse. While the character of Bohemond was ambitious, grasping, and unprincipled, the virtues of Tancred have been unanimously extolled by the historians of the day, and have been celebrated in undying verse from the pen of Tasso.

* The ceremony of the "adoption of honour," as it was called, was a curious custom of the time.

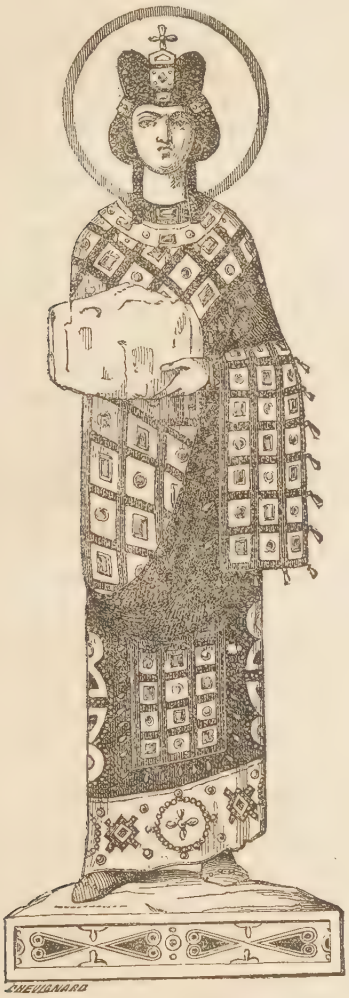
The army under these leaders landed at Durazzo, and passed through Epirus to Adrianople. Although Alexius had communicated with Bohemond, promising him assistance, the Greek troops harassed the advancing forces, and various engagements took place, with considerable loss on both sides. Bohemond then, at the invitation of the emperor, visited Constantinople, leaving his army behind under the command of Tancred. Influenced by large gifts of money and lands, Bohemond did homage to the emperor, and became one of his firmest allies.

Impressed with a sense of the humiliation of a concession which had been bought with gold, Tancred determined not to submit to similar demands. On receiving the news, the young knight immediately marched his army towards Constantinople, and crossing the Hellespont, without giving any notice of his intention, joined the forces of Godfrey at Chalcedon. Alexius made many efforts to bring back Tancred to Constantinople, and to induce him to do homage, but without success, and the attention of the emperor was presently drawn in another direction, by the arrival of Raimond of St. Gilles, count of Toulouse, with an army of crusaders from Languedoc.

Raimond, who is represented as being revengeful and avaricious, but possessing considerable moral firmness, in conjunction with pride, refused to pay his allegiance to the emperor. The troops of the count of Toulouse were at a considerable distance from the army of his friends, and Alexius did not hesitate to order a night attack to be made from the city upon the French camp. The Languedocians, however, repulsed their assailants with great loss, and further negotiations, which afterwards took place, only resulted in a second refusal on the part of Raimond to pay the required homage. He, however, consented to take a vow that he would make no attempt against the life or honour of the emperor.

Alexius then changed his conduct, and invited the count

to the palace, where the luxury and magnificence which surrounded him produced its effect, and Raimond remained for some time amidst the pleasures of the court. Bohe-



Costume of an Empress of Constantinople.—From a Greek Manuscript.

mond and Godfrey, however, had already marched from Chalcedon towards Nice, the capital of the Turkish kingdom of Rhoum. On receiving the news of their departure,

Crown of the Empress of Constantinople, from an Arab Medal in Bronze.—See Marsden, *Numismata Orient. Illust.*, London, 1823-1825.

the count of Toulouse quitted Constantinople and hastened to follow the main body of the army.

Another army, forming the last division of the first crusade, soon afterwards appeared before Constantinople. Robert of Normandy had at length torn himself away from the pleasures of Italy, and had brought with him a well-appointed army, though fewer in numbers than those which had preceded him. Robert took the oath of allegiance, satisfied with the assurance that the other leaders had already done so, and his army having received supplies from the emperor, passed the Hellespont, and marched towards Nice, in the path of their companions.

During the successive visits of the crusaders to Constantinople, the Greek emperor had lost no opportunity of sowing jealousies and dissensions among them. Nevertheless, during the siege of Nice, which was the first combined undertaking of the army of the Cross, there seems to have been no want of harmony among the various leaders. This city, which was occupied by the Seljuk Turks, was strongly fortified by a solid wall, from which rose three hundred and fifty towers.

When the Christian leaders had united their forces, and had been joined by Peter the Hermit with the remnant of his multitude, the army of the Cross is said to have numbered six hundred thousand men, exclusive of those who did not carry arms. The number of knights is estimated as having been two hundred thousand. Soliman, the Soldan or Sultan of Rhoum, had quitted his capital on the approach of the crusaders, and having collected throughout the country a large body of horse, he made a sudden attack upon the Christian forces, and was defeated with great loss.

The siege of Nice was now pressed with vigour, but the town was obstinately defended, and many of the assailants were shot down by the arrows of the Turkish bowmen. One Turk in particular was seen to present himself repeatedly on the walls and to deal death wherever his aim was directed. The best aimed arrows having failed to touch him, the Christian soldiers were seized with a superstitious terror, and attributed to him the possession of some supernatural power. It is related by Albert of Aix, that Godfrey of Bouillon at length took a cross-bow himself, though that weapon was considered as fit only for a yeoman, and having directed it against the Turkish archer, sent an arrow to his heart.

The supplies of the town were obtained by means of the lake Ascanius, which lay beneath its walls, and when this circumstance was discovered by the crusaders, they established a blockade. Alexius meanwhile had privately communicated with the Turks, who agreed to surrender the city into his hands on condition of receiving immunity and protection. When, therefore, the besieging forces expected the submission of the garrison, the imperial ensigns suddenly appeared upon the walls. It had been previously determined between the emperor and the Christian leaders that on the fall of the city it should be given up to Alexius, and that the riches it contained should be distributed among the troops. The treachery of the emperor in having forestalled this arrangement, excited the greatest indignation among the soldiers of the crusade, and their leaders found great difficulty in restraining them from that vengeance which they demanded.

The army having resumed its march, the divisions headed by Bohemond and Robert of Normandy became separated from the main body. After crossing arid plains and barren hills, they encamped for the night in a pleasant valley watered by a running stream. On the following morning

they were suddenly attacked by an army of two hundred thousand men, who rushed down upon them from the mountains with shouts that shook the air.

The crusaders made a gallant resistance, but they had to deal with an enemy whose superiority lay not less in numbers, than in the fleetness of their steeds and the position of the ground. The Christian soldiers were mown down by flights of arrows and by the charges of the Turkish cavalry; and on being attacked simultaneously in the front and the rear they gave way and fell into confusion. The Turks forced their way into the camp of Bohemond, where they massacred the old, the women, and the helpless.

At this juncture the stout heart of Robert of Normandy saved his companions from the disgrace of utter defeat. Spurring his horse among the flying troops, he uncovered his head, and through the din and confusion of the fray sounded his battle-cry of "Normandy!"

"Bohemond!" he shouted, "whither fly you? Your Apulia is afar! Where go you, Tancred? Otranto is not near you! Turn upon the enemy! God wills it! God wills it!"

And with these words he rallied the troops, drove back the Turks, and maintained a firm line of defence. The battle raged during many hours with great slaughter on both sides, and the Christian troops were gradually giving way before overwhelming numbers, when the Red Cross banner appeared upon the hills, and the army of Godfrey of Bouillon advanced to change the fortune of the day. The Paynim host were compelled to fly in disorder, and their camp, containing great booty of food and provisions, fell into the hands of the crusaders.

In the subsequent march through Phrygia the Christians had to pass over a large tract of country which had been completely ravaged by the enemy. Their provisions soon became exhausted, and under the burning rays of a southern sun they found themselves without water. The accounts given by the chroniclers of the sufferings of the troops are too dreadful to be repeated here in detail. Men, women, and horses, fell by thousands on the way, and perished by a lingering and painful death.

At length water was found, and the host of the crusade reached the city of Antiochetta. Here, surrounded by a fertile district, the main body of the troops rested for a while from their fatigues, while detachments under the command of Tancred and Baldwin, brother of Godfrey Bouillon, made incursions through the country and became possessed of the towns of Tarsus and Mamistra. Subsequently Baldwin crossed the Euphrates and was elected king of Edessa, in which city he remained until the conquest of the Holy Land was completed.

The great army of the crusade continued its march through uninhabited wilds and barren mountains, and having taken possession of Artesia, advanced towards Antioch. Situated on the hills above the river Orontes, the town of Antioch was so strongly fortified by nature as well as by art, that all efforts to take it by assault proved fruitless, and the movable towers, mangonels, battering-rams, and other engines, which were brought to bear by the besieging army, were used without effect.

Meanwhile famine and disease spread their ravages in the camp without the walls, and the storms of winter proved more fatal to the troops than the arrows of the enemy. Rendered reckless by their sufferings the soldiers cast aside all the obligations of morality; crimes of the worst description became common, and even the ties of nature were forgotten. We are told by William of Malmesbury, that such was the extremity to which the crusaders were reduced that many of them fed upon the dead bodies of their companions. Some of the inferior leaders deserted the army, and among these was Peter the Hermit, whose impulsive enthusiasm gave way before continued misfortunes. He, however, was brought back by Tancred, and was compelled to take a vow that he would not again abandon the enterprise until the army had reached Jerusalem.

After various encounters had taken place before the walls, during which the knights of the crusade performed extraordinary feats of valour, the town of Antioch was surprised in the night, and the Turkish inhabitants were slaughtered indiscriminately. The victors, however, found their condition but little improved by the conquest. The city was rich in booty of various kinds, but contained only a scanty store of provision, of which the crusaders stood most in need.

Reduced to a state of famine within the walls, the Christians found themselves attacked from without by the forces of the Persian sultan, who had advanced to rid the country of the invaders. The army of Godfrey had the choice between giving battle to their assailants, or of perishing miserably in the city. Various means having been resorted to of arousing the superstitious feelings of the soldiers, the Christian host marched out from the gates and began the attack. The ghastly faces of men worn down by famine and misery, were lighted once more by the flame of fanaticism, and the wild multitude threw themselves with desperate vigour upon the splendidly appointed host of the Moslem.

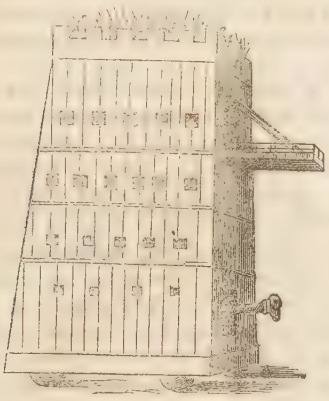
In the midst of the contest the crusaders saw, or thought they saw, some figures clothed in white raiment and mounted upon white horses, advancing to their aid over the mountains. A cry was raised that the saints were coming to fight on their side, and so powerful was the effect of the enthusiasm thus produced, so terrible was the charge of the Christians upon their enemies, that the Persian host was utterly routed, and dispersed over the hills. Nearly seventy thousand Turks are said to have died in the battle of Antioch, while the loss on the part of their opponents did not exceed ten thousand. The crusaders re-entered the city laden with the rich booty of the Turkish camp, in which were found provisions of all kinds, with stores of gold and arms.

While the Christian army was reposing in the midst of plenty, Hugh of Vermandois and Baldwin of Mons were despatched to Constantinople on a mission to the Emperor Alexius. Baldwin fell into a Turkish ambuscade, and his fate is not known, but Hugh of Vermandois arrived safely at the Byzantine court. Alexius, careless of his plighted faith, refused to send the reinforcements which were demanded, and suffered events to take their course. The count of Vermandois having tasted once more the pleasures of ease and luxury, and wearied with the fatigues and privations of the crusade, abandoned the cause which he had sworn to maintain, and leaving his companions in arms to their fate, he returned to his estates in France.

Meanwhile a pestilence broke out in Antioch, and compelled the chiefs to separate and distribute their men in cantonments over the country. A desultory but successful

warfare continued to be waged against the Turks, and many towns and fortresses fell into the hands of the crusaders. At length, after further sufferings and much hard fighting, the remnant of the army of the Cross arrived before Jerusalem. Of those immense armies, the flower of European chivalry, which had passed in splendid array under the walls of Constantinople, only about fifty thousand men were left to reach the holy city.

An attack was commenced immediately, headed by Godfrey of Bouillon, Tancred, Robert of Normandy, and Robert of Flanders. The barbicans were carried and a portion of the wall was thrown down; but, such was the strength of the fortifications, and so obstinate the defence of the Turks, that it became necessary to construct engines of assault similar to those which had been used in the siege of Nice. Catapults and movable towers were prepared, and to these was added a machine called the "sow," made of wood and covered with raw hides to protect it from fire. The hollow space within was filled with soldiers, who, with this protection, were occupied in undermining the walls.

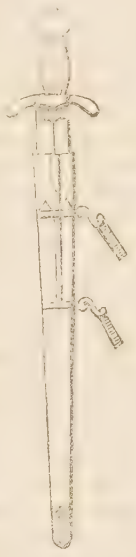


Movable Tower.

To secure success to the final effort of the enterprise, the leaders exerted themselves to heal the dissensions which had hitherto existed in the army, and Tancred set an example of conciliation by embracing his foe, Raimond of Toulouse, in sight of the troops. An expiatory procession, headed by the chiefs and the clergy, was made round the walls of the city, and prayers were offered up at some of the holy places in the neighbourhood for the success of the Christian arms. These demonstrations were treated by the Turks with contempt; they mocked at the procession as it passed before them, and, having raised the Cross upon the walls, they threw dirt upon the sacred symbol. The anger of the crusaders was excited to the utmost, and their interpretation of the religion of peace permitted them to mingle oaths of vengeance with the prayers for victory.

The preparations having been completed, the towers were rolled up to the walls and the attack commenced. The chiefs of the Christian army appeared on the higher stages of the towers, and Godfrey of Bouillon himself was seen with a cross-bow in his hand directing his shafts within the town. The Turks replied by pouring out sheets of flame * and flights of arrows upon their assailants. The assault had continued for ten days without result, when the crusaders redoubled their efforts: some soldiers from the tower of Godfrey effected a lodgment upon the walls, and were immediately followed by the lord of Loraine, with Baldwin de Bourg and other chiefs of the army. Robert of Normandy and Tancred forced open one of the gates, and the standard of the Cross was raised upon the walls of Jerusalem.

The details of the massacre that ensued form one of the bloodiest pages of history. The Turks, after a vain attempt to dispute the advance of the crusaders, fled to the mosques and were slain before the altars. The inhabitants of the city were put to the sword without distinction, women and children sharing the fate of their husbands and their fathers. Ten thousand men are said to have been butchered in the temple of Soliman, where they had attempted to defend themselves. Streams of blood flowed down the streets of the city, and few of the infidel race escaped the carnage. Such was the vengeance taken by the crusaders for the persecutions suffered by the Christians in Jerusalem; such were the deeds of horror perpetrated in the name of the Saviour of mankind, as though the Majesty of Heaven could be propitiated by a libation of human blood. The leaders of the crusade had been taught to believe that in directing the work of slaughter they were engaged in an act acceptable to God, and that the highest duty of religion lay in the extermination of the infidel.



Sword of Godfrey of Bouillon, from the original, preserved at Jerusalem.

It became necessary to place the safety of the Holy City in the care of one powerful chief, and Godfrey of Bouillon was elected the first king of Jerusalem. He was invested with this new dignity in the church of the Holy Sepulchre, but refused to be crowned, saying that it was not fitting that he should wear a crown of gold in the city where the Saviour had been crowned with thorns.

Tomb of Godfrey of Bouillon.

On the return of Godfrey from an expedition against the Saracens, the emir of Cæsarea went to the king and offered him the fruits of Palestine. Godfrey ate an apple, and fell sick so suddenly, that it was supposed he had been poisoned. He returned with difficulty to his capital, and there died, July 18, 1100. His body was laid near to the sepulchre of that Saviour in whose

* The nature of the chemical preparation known as the Greek fire has not been ascertained with certainty, but it is probable that naphtha was one of the principal ingredients.

cause, though with a mistaken devotion, he had given his life.

It does not fall within the scope of this history to trace the progress of events at Jerusalem under its Latin kings. Some account may, however, be given of the origin of two powerful orders of knighthood, which date from the time of the first crusade.

Many years previous to the crusade, some Italian merchants had obtained permission from the caliph to build a hospital at Jerusalem for the protection of pilgrims. A piece of ground near to the site of the Holy Sepulchre was assigned to them for this purpose, and a chapel and hospital were built there, the first being dedicated to St. Mary, and the second to St. John the Almoner. During the siege of Jerusalem many of the sick and wounded crusaders were brought into the hospital; and, in gratitude for the benefits they received there, they determined to dedicate their lives to charitable acts, and to enter the monastery of St. John. They assumed as a dress a black robe, with the figure of a white cross with eight points. Pope Pascal II. bestowed many valuable privileges upon the order, and the Poor Brothers of the Hospital of St. John became a wealthy community, famed throughout Europe. During the reign of Baldwin of Bourg, the third king of Jerusalem, the Hospitallers resumed the sword, binding themselves by a vow to draw it only against the enemies of Christ. The order of St. John was then divided into the several classes of knights, clergy, and serving brothers. The knights were highest in rank, and commanded in battle or in the hospital; the serving brothers filled the offices of esquires, or assisted the clergy in attendance upon the sick. The vows which were taken by all without distinction, included the duties of chastity, of obedience to the council, and of a renunciation individually of all worldly possessions.

The order of the Red Cross knights, or Templars, is to be referred to a different origin, though the objects for which it was instituted were of a similar kind. A few French knights of the first crusade associated together by a solemn compact to aid each other in protecting pilgrims and travellers, and in fighting against the enemies of the Cross. They took vows of obedience to a grand master whom they had appointed, and also bound themselves to purity of life, to mutual assistance, and that they would fight continually against the infidel, never turning back from less than four adversaries. Having no fixed dwelling-place, these knights were assigned a lodging near to the Temple, whence they derived the title of Templars, which afterwards became so famous. They wore a white robe, to which was attached a red cross. In addition to their great standard, which also displayed these colours, they carried in battle a banner with black and white stripes, which was intended to signify charity and kindness to their friends and destruction to their enemies. The Knights Templars, whose rules, like those of the Hospitallers, enjoined humility and poverty, soon became the proudest and wealthiest order in Christendom; and while the knights of St. John remained during several centuries honoured and respected for acts of benevolence, the Templars became hated and feared for their vices and their cruelty. Much of the chivalry of Europe afterwards became merged in these two orders of knighthood, to which it became a matter of high distinction to be attached; and men did not hesitate to assume the religious habit, and assent to rules of mortification, while they neither revered the one nor were bound by the other.

Templars—after Mifliez.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Reign of William Rufus continued—Insurrection in Maine—Death of Rufus.

THE money which William Rufus paid to his brother for the possession of Normandy was obtained in his accustomed manner, by inflicting new burdens and exactions upon his people. The account taken from the old chroniclers is thus related by Holinshed:—"He did not only oppress and fleece his poor subjects, but rather with importunate exactions did, as it were, flea off their skins. All this was grievous and intolerable, as well to the spirituality as temporality, so that divers bishops and abbesses, who had already made away with some of their chalices and church jewels to pay the king, made now plain answer that they were not able to help him with any more; unto whom, on the other side, as the report went, the king said again:—'Have you not, I beseech you, coffins of gold and silver, full of dead men's bones?'—meaning the shrines in which the relics of saints were enclosed."

The king also argued that there was no sacrilege in taking money obtained from such a source, for the purpose of prosecuting a holy war, and delivering the sepulchre of Christ from the hands of the infidel. He did not choose to remember that the expedition to the Holy Land was one in which he had no part, and that he required the money, not for that purpose, but to obtain a worldly possession. If the argument carried little weight, the force by which it was backed was not to be resisted, and the spoils of the altar as well as the hoards of civilians were seized in the king's name.

Robert having resigned his dukedom and set out for the Holy Land, William passed over into Normandy to take possession. He was received with welcome by the Norman nobles, who, if not well disposed towards their new sovereign, were overawed by his power or bought by his gold. The people of Maine, however, rose in revolt, and headed by Helie, the lord of La Flêche, the insurrection assumed an importance which rendered it necessary for Rufus to take energetic measures for its repression. He entered Maine in person at the head of a large force, but on the interference of the count of Anjou and Philip of France, he consented to a truce with the insurgents, and Helie, having been taken prisoner, was set at liberty, on tendering his submission, and giving up the town of Mans into the king's hands. A.D. 1099.

The Death of William Rufus.

The people, however, remained disaffected towards the English king, and his government was odious to them. A year passed away without any change in this state of things, when one day, as William was hunting in the New Forest, a messenger came to him from beyond sea with the intelligence that Helie had obtained possession of the town of Mans, that the inhabitants had joined his standard, and were besieging the castle containing the Norman garrison. Rufus immediately set off for the sea-coast, without waiting

for an escort; and when some of his lords came up with him, as he was about to embark, they counselled him to wait until troops could be summoned to accompany him. William replied: "Such as love me, I know well, will follow me," and went at once on shipboard. A storm was blowing so violently that even the sailors hesitated to set sail; but the king was determined to proceed, and cried out to the master to weigh anchor, asking him if he had ever heard of a king that was drowned?

Rufus escaped the storm, and landed the next day at Harfleur. When the news of his advance reached the town of Mans, the insurgents appear to have been struck with dismay. Helie, forgetting his knightly fame, and the safety of the people, who looked to him for guidance, disbanded his troops and fled at the mere sound of the enemy's approach, while William passed through the country, dealing ruin and desolation around him. A short time sufficed to reduce the insurgents to submission, and this being accomplished Rufus returned to England.

On his return to England, the king began, "after his old manner, to spoil and waste the country by unreasonable exactions," assisted by his favourite, Ralph Flambard. Various public buildings, which were erected by Rufus, served as pretexts for demands of money, a large portion of which was applied to satisfy his own private extravagance.

In the month of August, A.D., 1100, there was held, in the New Forest, a hunting meeting, at which the king was present. This district, where the blackened ruins of villages still remained; where the ground had been watered by the tears and the blood of the miserable inhabitants, murdered or driven from their homes; where the trees grew thickly in commemoration of a deed of cruelty which has but few parallels in history; this gloomy solitude was destined to be the death-scene of Rufus, as it had already been of two other persons of the Conqueror's blood. In the year 1081, Richard, the eldest son of William I., had mortally wounded himself in the New Forest; and in May, 1100, Richard, son of Duke Robert and nephew of Rufus, was killed there accidentally by an arrow. In these successive calamities, the people thought they saw a retribution for the crime which had been committed in that place. With little light of religion, and but vague notions of Providence, they entertained a deep-seated belief in a punishment attendant on crime, and in the final, though long delayed, triumph of the principle of justice.

On Lammas-day the king and his court were assembled at Malwood-keep or castle, preparing to go a-hunting. A large and noble company were there making merry, and at the side of the king sat Prince Henry; the two brothers having become reconciled some time before. Among the party was a Norman knight noted as a good sportsman and a gallant gentleman; his name was Sir Walter Tyrrel or De Poix.

The monkish historians relate that during the feast a message came to the king from the abbot of a neighbouring monastery to the effect that a monk the night before had a dream in which the fiend had appeared to him, and that the dream foretold some impending evil to the king. Rufus laughed at the story. "The man is a right monk," he said, "and dreams for money. Give him an hundred pence and tell him to dream of better fortune to our person."

If there is any truth in this story, it is probable that William was more affected by the prediction of the monk than he was willing to admit. He, however, passed on the wine cup quicker than before, encouraged the revelry of the party, and at length rose up and gave the signal to horse.

The company separated on arriving in the forest, as the custom was in hunting; the only person who remained near to the king being Sir Walter Tyrrel. As it drew towards evening, a hart suddenly bounding from a thicket crossed the path of the king. Rufus drew his bow, but the shot missed its mark. Tyrrel was placed at some little distance in the underwood, and the hart being attacked on both sides, stood for a moment at bay. Then the king, who had spent all his arrows, called out to his companion, "Shoot! shoot! in the devil's name!" Tyrrel obeyed, and the arrow glancing from a tree, struck the king in the breast, piercing him to the heart. Rufus fell beside his startled horse, and died instantaneously.

Such is the story most commonly related of the death of the Red King, but the account is not to be received without reservation. The facts which may be considered fully authenticated are, that Rufus met with a violent death in the New Forest, having been shot in the breast by an arrow. Whether the bow was drawn "at a venture," or by the hand of a murderer—whether the hand was that of Sir Walter Tyrrel or of another, are questions to which no positive answer can be given.

Tyrrel, however, was suspected from the first of having killed the king. He immediately galloped away to the sea-coast and took ship for Normandy, whence he proceeded to seek the protection of the king of France. On arriving there he swore solemnly that he had no part in the death of King William; but in those days few men hesitated either to make or break an oath for a powerful motive, and, therefore, this circumstance of itself would not be sufficient to throw discredit on the account already related.

The body of the king was discovered by a poor charcoal burner, named Purkess, by whom it was carried in a cart to Winchester cathedral, where it was buried.

Rufus died at about forty-three years of age, having reigned thirteen years. He was short in stature, with red hair, and a stout person. He had an impediment in his speech, especially in moments of anger, for then, says Holinshed, "his utterance was so hindered, that he could scarcely show the conceits of his mind." He was fond of gorgeous apparel, and it is said of him that on one occasion he threw away a pair of new hose, because they cost no more than three shillings. In a vicious age he was remarkable for his debaucheries, and he died without issue.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Influence of the Norman Conquest on English Civilisation—Review of Saxon and Norman Customs—Progress of Literature and the Arts—Social Life of the Anglo-Saxons—Sports and Pastimes—Condition of the People of Normandy—The Bayeux Tapestry.

ANY narrative purporting to be the history of a nation, and which at the same time should confine itself to an account of wars, cabals, and changes of dynasty, would be extremely imperfect. To form a just estimate of the character of a people, to appreciate fully the effect of the various causes which indirectly influence the progress of political events, it is necessary to study the condition of social life, and the state of the arts and industry of the period. It is intended, therefore, to interrupt, from time to time, the main

current of the narrative, for the purpose of viewing the people at home, and of investigating, as far as the materials at command will permit, the condition of society, and the advance of civilisation.

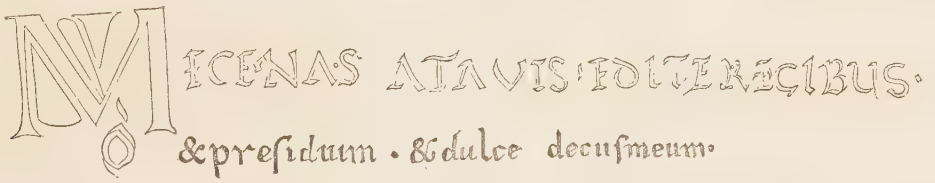
From the time when the Gothic nations spread themselves over Southern and Western Europe, till the fourteenth century, nearly all the literature then in existence, was preserved to us by the labours of the monks. The monasteries were the schools of the middle ages, in which all secular knowledge, as well as religious doctrine, was cultivated. Previous to the invention of printing, books were transcribed with great pains and labour. Not only was the mere task of copying a book by hand a work of considerable time, but the illuminations or embellishments with which the more valuable manuscripts were adorned, were executed with a degree of care and finish demanding great skill and industry. The annexed engravings are copied with scrupulous fidelity from various MSS. still

Fragment of a copy of the Evangelists in Latin. Anglo-Saxon MS. of the 10th century, with illuminated initial letter (reduced to half the original size).—Imperial Library of Paris.

ornamental portions of the work, are brilliantly coloured and are often represented on a gold ground.

The ancients wrote upon various substances, including stone, metals, leaves of different kinds of trees, wood, ivory, wax, skins of animals, more or less prepared, and papyrus, which was the inner bark of a reed. The plant is found on the banks of the Nile, grows several feet high, and bears leaves. Papyrus was used by the Egyptians and Romans, and was commonly employed from a remote period until the eleventh century. The most ancient bulls of the Popes were written on papyrus.

The parchment used was of various kinds; that which was the finest and whitest being used for the most valuable manuscripts. For gilding upon parchment our ancestors employed both gold powder and leaf gold, which was fixed upon a white embossment, generally supposed to be a calcareous preparation. The subjects of the paintings were taken from sacred or profane history, but the artist invariably represented the costume

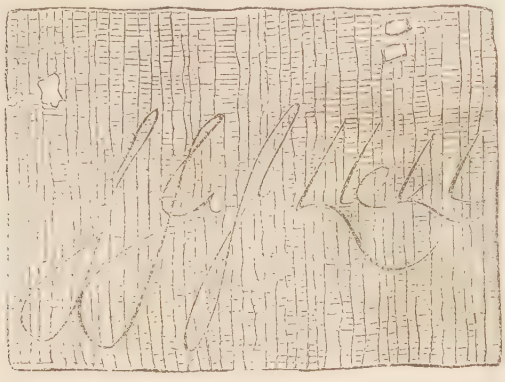


Fragment of an Ode to Mecænas. MS. of the Works of Horace; 10th century.—Imperial Library of Paris.

Anglo-Saxon Writing of the 6th century.

extant, and serve to show some of the different kinds of writing which are found in those documents. Many of the MSS. also contain on each page paintings representing scenes either connected with the narrative in the text or otherwise. Sometimes they are ornamented with portraits of saints, kings, or other great men. These figures, as well as the other and customs of his own time, and to these illuminations we owe most of the knowledge we possess of those customs. The Anglo-Saxons displayed proficiency in this branch of painting at an early period; and though it is not easy to trace the rise and progress of the art, there is evidence of its flourishing condition from the eighth to the eleventh

centuries, in the numerous manuscripts of that date, which still remain both in our own country, and in the collections on the Continent.



Latin Papyrus of the 3rd century.

Previous to the introduction of Christianity, the Anglo-Saxons possessed no literature worthy of the name. It is not, however, to be supposed that the people were destitute of intellectual power, for when our forefathers began to apply themselves to the pursuit of knowledge, the progress of literature was remarkably rapid. Within one hundred years after the light of knowledge dawned upon the Anglo-Saxons, Bede, surnamed the Venerable, appeared, with other men whose abilities and teaching exerted a marked influence upon the spread of English learning.

The Anglo-Saxon scholars, though defective in actual knowledge, had just conceptions of the objects of philosophy. Alcuin defines it to be the study of natural things, and the knowledge of divine and human affairs. All the subjects comprised by Alcuin in physics are arithmetic, geometry music, and astronomy. That larger field of science to which we now give the name of physics had not yet been discovered, nor had chemistry, mineralogy, and the other analogous sciences.

Turner, in his "History of the Anglo-Saxons," gives specimens of scholastic trifling from a dialogue of Alcuin with Prince Pepin, the son of Charlemagne. As examples of the manner in which the brain was exercised in the absence of solid learning, some portions of this dialogue are worthy of preservation. Some of the questions with the answers are subjoined:—

"What is life?—The gladness of the blessed; the sorrow of the wretched; the expectation of death.

"What is death?—The inevitable event; the uncertain pilgrimage; the tears of the living; the confirmation of our testament; the thief of man.

"What is sleep?—The image of death.

"What is man's liberty?—Innocence.

"What is the brain?—The preserver of the memory.

"What is the sun?—The splendour of the world; the beauty of heaven; the honour of day; the distributor of the hours.

"What is the moon?—The eye of night; the giver of dew; the prophetess of the weather.

"What is rain?—The earth's conception; the mother of corn.

"What is the earth?—The nurse of the living; the storehouse of life; the devourer of all things.

"What is the sea?—The path of audacity; the divider of regions; the fountain of showers.

"What is a ship?—A wandering house; a perpetual inn; a traveller without footsteps.

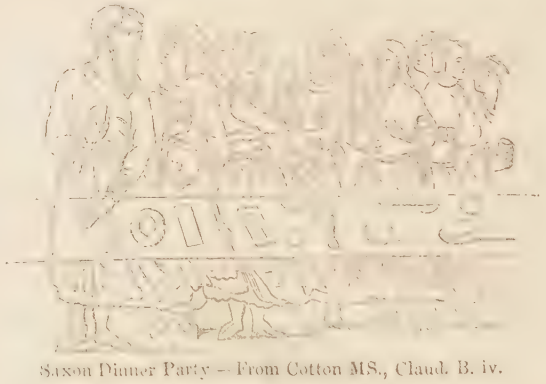
"What makes bitter things sweet?—Hunger.

"What makes men never weary?—Gain.

"What gives sleep to the watching?—Hope.

"Who is he that will rise higher if you take away his head?—Look in your bed and you will find him there."

The following account, taken from William of Malmesbury, of the social condition of the Saxon people at the time of the Conquest, indicates a decline of literature and the arts at that period. The picture may probably be overdrawn, but the main facts are correct. "In process of time, the desire after literature and religion had decayed for several years before the arrival of the Normans. The clergy, contented with a very slight degree of learning, could scarcely stammer out the words of the sacraments, and a person who understood grammar was an object of wonder and astonishment. The nobility were given up to luxury and wantonness. The commonalty, left unprotected, became a prey to the most powerful, who amassed fortunes, either by seizing on their property, or by selling their persons into foreign countries; although it be an innate quality of this people to be more inclined to reviling, than to the accumulation of wealth. Drinking was an universal practice in which they passed entire nights, as well as days. They consumed their substance in mean and despicable houses, unlike the Normans and French, who in noble and splendid mansions lived with frugality."

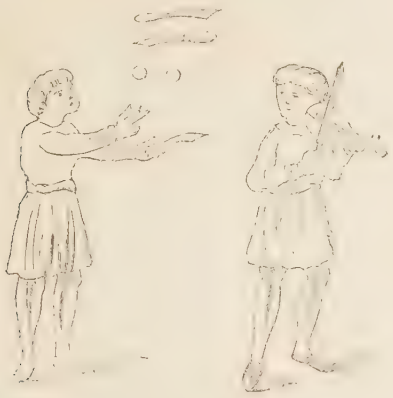


Saxon Dinner Party.—From Cotton MS., Claud. B. iv.

Music was cultivated by our ancestors from a very remote period. Among the Anglo-Saxons the music to which the greatest attention was bestowed was that employed in the services of religion. Singing in churches is said to have been introduced into this country in the fourth century.

Among the northern nations the Scalds were at once the poets and musicians. Like the bards of the Britons they celebrated the deeds of the great and brave in heroic poems which were sung to the sounds of the lyre or the harp. After the conquest of Britain by the Saxons, these minstrels remained in high favour among the people, and were received with respect and veneration in the courts of kings and the halls of the nobles. In the Anglo-Saxon language they were known by two appellations, the one equivalent to the English word gleemen or merry-makers, and the other harpers, derived from the instrument on which they usually played.

The gleemen were jugglers and pantomimists as well as minstrels, and they were accustomed to associate themselves in companies and amuse the spectators with feats of strength and agility, dancing, and sleight of hand tricks.



Gleemen Juggling. 10th century.—From the Cotton. MS., Tib. C. 6.

Among the minstrels who came into England with William the Conqueror, was one named Taillefer, of whom it is related that he was present at the Battle of Hastings, and took his place at the head of the Norman army, inspiriting the soldiers by his songs. Before the battle commenced he advanced on horseback towards the English lines, and casting his spear three times into the air, he caught it each time by the iron head and then threw it among his enemies, one of whom he wounded. He then drew his sword and threw it into the air, catching it as he had done the spear, with such dexterity, that the English who saw him believed that he was gifted with the power of enchantment.

The term minstrel, or, in Norman French, *ministraulx*, came into use in England soon after the Conquest, at which time it is believed that the class of minstrels and jesters became much more numerous. The general language of France in the ninth century was the Roman language, or, as it has since been called, the *langue d'Oc*, which closely resembled the dialects of the Catalonian. The language of the North, or *langue d'Oil*, varied but little from it. At this period the flowing accents of the southern tongue were wedded to music by minstrels, who were called troubadours in the southern provinces, and trouveres in the North.

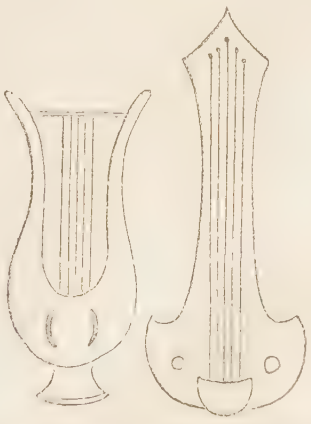
These poets became known throughout Europe for their songs of love and war, in which they celebrated the beauty of women and the achievements of the brave. The minstrels enjoyed many privileges, and travelled from place to place, in time of war as well as of peace, in perfect safety; their persons were held sacred, and they were received wherever they went with the warmest welcome and hospitality.

In our own country the professors of the minstrel's art were of various classes, which were distinguished by the several names of singers, relaters of heroic actions, jesters, balancers, jugglers, and story-tellers. At this period every great baron kept a jester as a part of his household establishment.

The word jester, in its original sense, did not necessarily mean joker, or buffoon, but teller of tales which might be of a kind to excite either laughter or pity. The jesters, however, were usually employed at feasts and in the hours of conviviality, and they found the tales of merriment so much more popular at such times, that it is probable that the more serious part of their vocation fell into disuse. In later times the jesters and japers became mere merry-andrews, whose business it was to excite mirth by jokes and ludicrous gesticulations.

Balancing.—From MS. in the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

In old times the number of musical instruments was considerable, but their names were still more numerous, because the names were derived from the form and character of instruments, which varied according to the caprice of the maker or the musician. Each nation had its peculiar instruments of music, and as these were described in each language by names appropriate to their qualities, the same instrument was frequently known by many names, while the same names sometimes applied to several instruments. The Romans, after their conquests, were in the habit of carrying back with them the music and the instruments which they found among the conquered nations, and thus it happened that at a certain epoch all the musical instruments of the known world were collected in the capital of the empire. At the fall of Rome many of these fell into disuse and were forgotten; they were no longer needed to celebrate the festivals of pagan deities, or to add gaiety to the ovations to the emperors in the capitol. A letter of St. Jerome to Dardanus (*de diversis generibus musicorum instrumentis*) gives an account of those instruments which remained in existence in the fifth



Musical Instruments.—From the Caedmon MS., Oxford.

century. St. Jerome enumerates the organ, various kinds of trumpets, the cithar, in the form of a Greek delta (Δ), with twenty-four strings; the *psalterium*, a small harp of a square form, with ten strings; the *tympanum*, or hand drum; and several others.

These appear to have been almost the only musical instruments in use in the fifth century. A nomenclature of a similar kind appears in the ninth century, in a manuscript life of Charlemagne, by Aymeric de Peyræ,* from which we find the number of instruments to have been nearly doubled in the course of four centuries, and their forms during this period had continually varied.

The flute is the most ancient of all instruments of music, and in the middle ages was found in many varieties. Among these was the double flute of the classic form having two stems. The stem held in the left hand (*sinistra*) was for the high notes, and that held in the right hand (*dextra*) for the low notes. The two stems were sometimes held together, sometimes separate.

Dance (9th century), the Lyre, and Double Flute.—From the Cotton. MS., Cleopatra, C. 8.

About the year 951, Bishop Elfega caused to be made for his church at Winchester an organ which, in size and construction, surpassed any that had hitherto been seen. This organ was divided into two parts, each having its bellows, its key-board, and its player; twelve bellows above and fourteen below were set in motion by sixty-six strong men, and the wind was passed along forty valves into four hundred pipes, arranged in groups of ten, and to each of these groups corresponded one of the twenty-four keys of each key-board. In spite of the great size of this organ, we can hardly believe that its sound was heard over the whole town (*undique per urbem*), as we are told by a contemporary poet.

The syrinx, which was, in fact, the Pandean pipes, was composed usually of seven tubes of unequal length, forming a straight line at the top, for the mouth of the player.

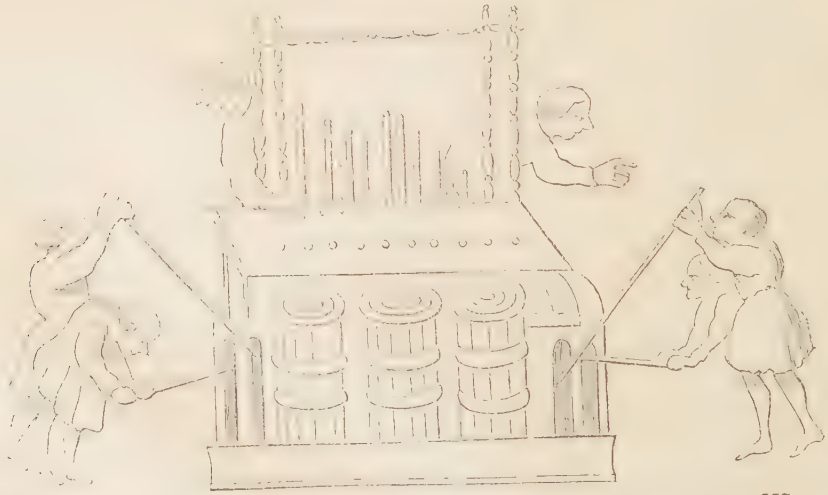
Trumpets were much in use among the Saxons, and were employed in the chase and in the tourney, as well as in sounding the charge in battle. They were also used at feasts, public assemblies, and as signals by which one man could communicate with another at a distance beyond the reach of the voice.

The lyre, which was the principal stringed instrument of the Greeks and the Romans, preserved its primitive form until the tenth century. The number of cords varied from three to eight. The lyre of the North, which was unquestionably the origin of the violin, and which already presented the shape of that instrument, had a bridge in the middle of the sound-board.

The *psalterium*, which must not be confounded with the *psalterion* of the thirteenth century, was a little portable harp, played either with one or both hands. After the fifth century its shape varied, and was sometimes square or triangular, and sometimes round. In the tenth century the psalterium gave place to the cithar, a name by which various stringed instruments had at first been vaguely described. The cithar, properly so called, had the form of the Greek Delta (Δ).

The Saxon harp was at first only a triangular cithar. Although some antiquaries have pretended to have discovered the harp among the records of Grecian, Roman, and Egyptian antiquity, there can be little doubt that its origin must be referred to the people of the North. The Gaelic etymology of the word harp may be taken as a proof of this.

* In the Imperial Library at Paris.



Grand Organ, with bellows and double keyboard.—From the Psalter of Eadwine, Cambridge MS

Bishop and Lords.

Noble Ladies and Citizens.

Prince, Princess, and Crossbowman.

Artisans and Artificers.

NORMAN COSTUMES OF THE 11TH CENTURY.—(See page 144.)

The Saxon harp of the ninth century appears to have differed little from the modern instrument of that name, and the simplicity and elegance of its form had arrived nearly at perfection. The Saxon gleemen usually

Harp with twelve strings. 9th century.—MS. of St. Blaise

sang to the harp, and this instrument was also in common use among persons who did not follow the profession of minstrels. Bede tells us that, as early as the seventh century, it was customary at convivial meetings to hand a harp from one person to another, and that every one present played upon it in turn, singing a song to the music. This may be presumed to have been the case when the professional harper was not present, whose business it was to amuse the company.

The Saxons and other German nations, as well as the Normans, were strongly attached to the sports of the field. At an early period, we find that hunting was considered a necessary part of the education of every man of gentle blood. Alfred the Great, before he was twelve years of

Ladies Hunting.—From Royal MS., 2 B. vii.

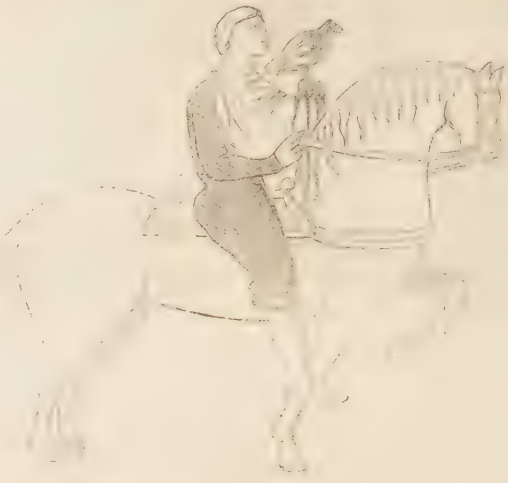
age, is represented to have "excelled in all the branches of that most noble art, to which he applied with incessant labour." We are told also that Edward the Confessor, though unlike his great ancestor in every other respect, took delight to follow a pack of hounds.

The sport of hawking, or the art of training and flyin

[illegible] MS. Tib. C. 6.

of hawks for the purpose of catching other birds, is of very high antiquity. Cornelius Agrippa, in his treatise "*De Incertitudine Scientiarum*," says that Ulysses learnt the art of falconry from the Trojans, and taught it to the Greeks to console them for their losses in the siege of Troy. Whatever may be thought of this evidence, there is reason to believe that the art was known to the Thracians, and, probably, also to other nations of antiquity.

Hawking was a recreation in high favour among the nobles of the middle ages, and was practised also by the clergy and by ladies. In the Bayeux tapestry Harold is represented with his hounds by his side, and a hawk in his hand, when brought before William of Normandy.



Harold.—From the Bayeux Tapestry.

Such a mode of travelling was common among the noblemen of this period. Persons of high rank rarely appeared without their hawks, and sometimes even carried them into battle. These birds were considered as the symbols of nobility, and a man who gave up his hawk, was regarded as disgraced and dishonoured.

These birds were trained and tended with the greatest care. To prevent the birds from seeing, their heads were covered with a little cap fastened behind with straps, and adorned with a plume. The falcons of princes and great nobles were known by these plumes being of the feathers of the bird of paradise. Thus armed, the birds were carried to the chase in a cage, and when it rained, were covered with an umbrella, similar to that here represented.

When the falcon became accustomed to his master, it was necessary to familiarise him to the noises of dogs and men; and to prevent the risk of his flying away, he was trained by means of the lure, which was an imitation of a bird. On the lure was placed a small piece of warm flesh of fowl, and the falcon was taught to come and eat at the voice of the falconer. A cord was attached to the bird's leg, and the person holding the cord retired to some paces distance, while another lifted the bird's cap and set him at liberty. The falconer then called the bird, showing the lure.

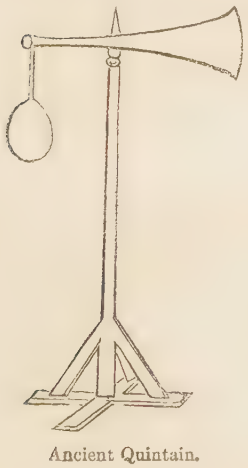
These details, with the accompanying engravings, are taken from the "*Livre du Roy Modus*," the most ancient of all the works on hawking.

Many other sports were also common at this period, among which may be noticed, sword and buckler play, and various games of ball.

Sword Play.—From Royal MS.

From Royal MS.

The tournament, which was the principal amusement of the Norman nobility at the time of the Conquest, was not introduced into England until the reign of Stephen, and will, therefore, be treated of hereafter. Various military exercises were, however, in existence, among which was the Quintain. A staff, from which a shield was hung, was fixed in the ground, and the performer, on horseback, rode full tilt at the mark, endeavouring to strike the shield with his lance. Sometimes the quintain was the figure of a Turk or Saracen, which was placed on a pivot in such a manner that, if the horseman failed to strike it in the face, he received a severe blow from the other end of the quintain, which turned round with great velocity.



Ancient Quintain.

Some military sports are described by Strutt as peculiar to the young men of London in the twelfth century. At this period, also, he tells us that it was common for the young men and maidens of the city to meet for dancing and merrymaking after the labours of the day, and that the city damsels played on the citherns, and kept up the dance by the light of the moon,—"usque imminente lunâ."

The leisure hours of the Anglo-Saxon women were spent in spinning, or in similar employments; and the lady of the house did not disdain to be among her maids, encouraging and assisting them in their duties. Strutt relates the following account, given by Ingulphus, of Edgitha, queen to Edward the Confessor:—"I have often seen her," he says, "while I was yet a boy, when my father was at the king's palace; and as I came from school, when I have met her, she would examine me in my learning, and from grammar she would proceed to logic (which she also understood), concluding with me in the most subtle argument; then causing one of her attendant maids to present me with three or four pieces of money, I was dismissed, being sent to the larder, where I was sure to get some eatables." The simplicity of manners here described, soon disappeared when the throne of England was occupied by Norman kings.

The articles of costume were of great variety. A taste for gorgeous finery appears in the dress of the male sex: we read of a king's coronation garment being made

Saxon Crowns.

of silk, woven with gold flowers; and of a cloak studded with gold and gems. The dress of the soldiers and civilians usually consisted of a close coat or tunic, reaching

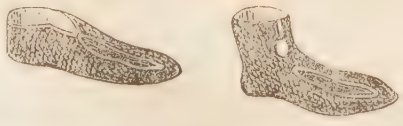
only to the knee, and a short cloak over the left shoulder, which buckled on the right. This cloak was often trimmed

Anglo-Saxon Costume.—Cotton. MS.

with an edging of gold. The kings and nobles also commonly wore a dress very similar to this, only richer and more elegant. In the paintings of the manuscripts, the women are usually represented in a long loose robe reaching to the ground, and with loose sleeves, the latter sometimes hanging a yard in length. Upon the head is a hood or veil, which falls down before, and is gathered into folds round the neck and breast. The robe is often ornamented with broad borders of different colours.

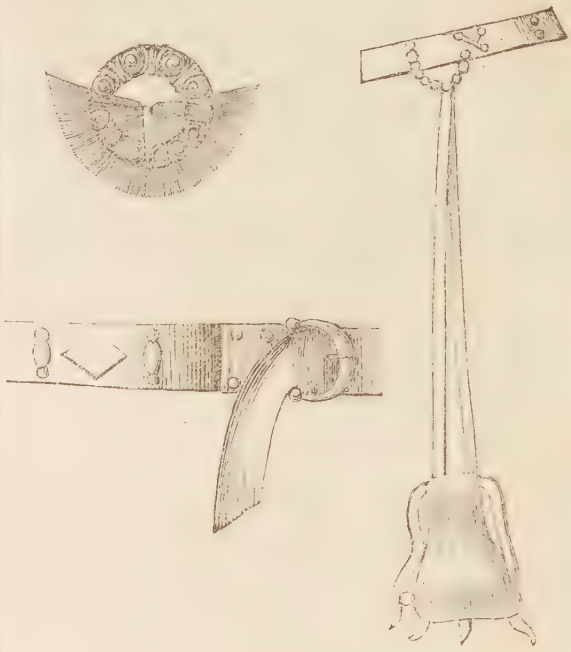
Ladies' Costume. 12th century.—Cotton. MS.

Both men and women wore shoes, or rather slippers; the legs of the men being covered half-way up with a kind of



Anglo-Saxon Shoes.

bandage wound round, or else a straight stocking reaching above the knee. Up to the period of the Conquest, the taste for gold ornaments had increased; and massive bracelets for the arms and neck, rings for the fingers, and chains of gold were common. Among the nobility circlets of gold set with jewels were worn on the head; and belts and girdles were much admired, and were often richly ornamented.



Cloak-pin, Buckle, and Pouch of the 12th century.

From the paintings of some of the Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, a knowledge may be gathered of their customs at table. In the engraving here given the table is of an oval form, and covered with a cloth. Upon it, besides a knife and

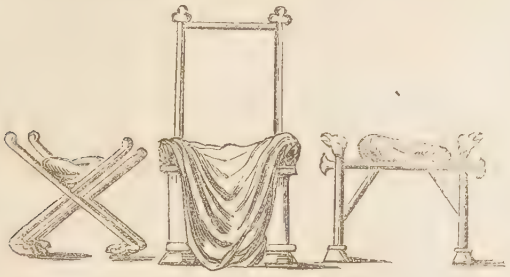
Anglo-Saxon Dinner Party.—From the Cotton. MS., Tib. C. 8.

spoon, there are a bowl with a fish, two other dishes, and some loaves of bread. At each end of the table are two attendants upon their knees, with a dish in one hand, and in the other a spit holding a piece of meat, which they are presenting to the guests. In other drawings of the MSS. the table is of a different form, ladies are represented as present, and the two sexes are arranged apparently without any precise order.

Cups of gold and silver were used, and also of bone and wood. Horns were much used at table. A curiously carved horn of the Anglo-Saxon times is still preserved in York Cathedral. Glass vessels were little known in this country previous to the Norman conquest. A disciple of Bede

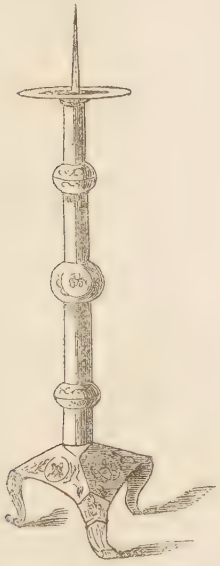
applied to Lullus, in France, to know if there was any man in that neighbourhood who could make glass vessels well, "For," said he, "we are ignorant and helpless in this art."

Of the furniture in use among the Anglo-Saxons little information has come down to us. Mention has already been made of hangings to be suspended on the walls of rooms, and



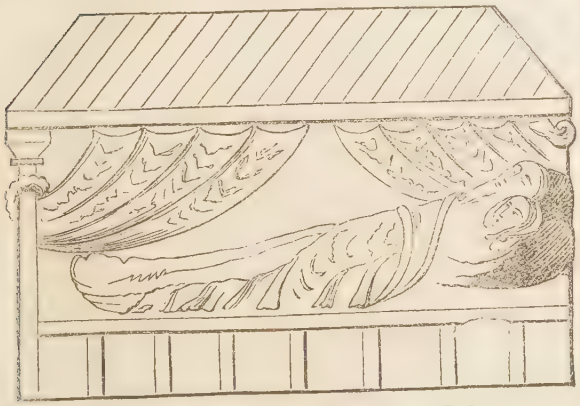
Chairs.—From Cotton. MS., Tib. C. 6.

adorned with figures of golden birds in needle-work. The love of gaudy colours which prevailed at that day was apparent in the furniture as well as in the dresses of the people; and the hangings and curtains were stained with purple and various other colours. Among the benches and chairs in use, some are represented as having animals' heads at the extremities.



Candles have probably been in use from a period of high antiquity, and were certainly known in the tenth century. The Anglo-Saxon word for candlestick, *candel-sticca*, seems to denote that the earlier candlesticks were made of wood. At this period the candle was not placed in a socket, as at present, but fixed on a long spike.

We find mention made of a curtain, sheets, and other clothes appertaining. A pillow of straw is also mentioned. Bear skins



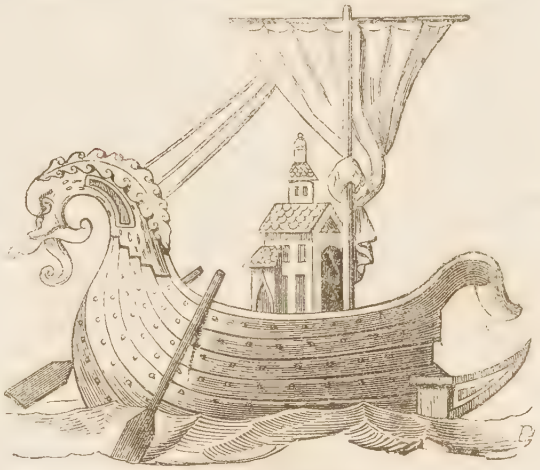
Saxon Bed.—From Cotton. MS., Claud. B. iv.

were sometimes used as a part of bed furniture. The engraving of a Saxon bed above given, is taken from Claud. B. iv., MSS. Brit. Museum.

The Anglo-Saxons seem to have practised great personal cleanliness. The use of the warm bath was common, for mention is made of a nun who, as an act of voluntary penance, washed in them only on festivals. It was also enjoined by the canons as a charitable duty to give to the poor, meal, fire, fodder, bathing, bed, and clothes.

The practice of burning the dead was common at one period among the northern nations, but among the Anglo-Saxons the custom of interment has prevailed from the earliest times to which the records of the monkish historians extend. The common coffins were of wood; those of kings and nobles were usually of stone.

At the time of the Conquest, the condition of the people in France and Normandy differed little from what it was in our own country. The nobles and higher ecclesiastics, all who possessed wealth, or were in a position to seize it by force, inhabited their castles and country houses, where they collected about them whatever the age could afford o



Norman Vessel. 12th century.

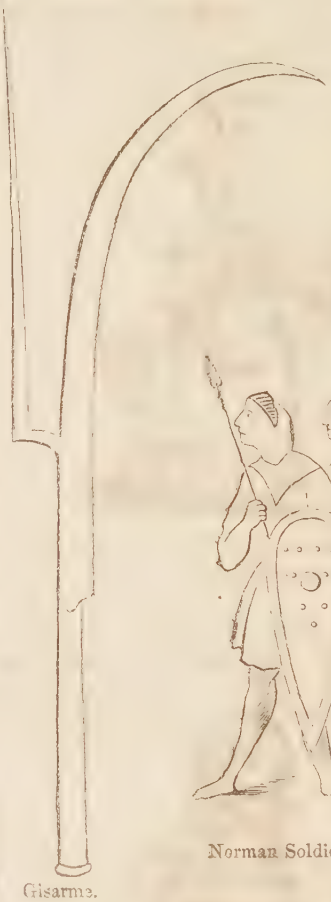
objects of luxury and elegance. Solitude and discouragement reigned around their dwellings. Industry and the arts languished obscurely in the towns, and commerce, restrained in its developments, was often conducted in secrecy

Comb in Ivory. Carving of the 12th century.

and danger. The merchant was compelled to travel with his goods from the castle of one baron to that of another. Living without a fixed residence or depôt for his goods, he might by this means escape from the exactions of the nobles, who, in fact, were to some extent dependent upon his services. Frequently the baron would cause some of his serfs to learn the mechanical arts so that the several labours of the carpenter, the armourer, the tailor, &c., might be available at once when required.

From an early period, the Franks of noble race wore long hair and beards; and the custom of Christian priests was the same until the third and fourth centuries. In the time of Charlemagne the costume was still simple, part Roman and part barbarous. The Franks piqued themselves upon their elegance; of which an example may be found in the journey of Rigontha, daughter of Chilperic, to visit the king of the Spanish Goths, to whom she was betrothed. "Rigontha, daughter of Chilperic, arrived at Tours with her treasures. Seeing that she had reached the frontier of the Goths, she began to retard her march, and so much the more because those about her said that it was necessary for her to stop in that neighbourhood, because they were fatigued with the journey; their clothes were dirty, their shoes worn out, and the harness of their horses and chariots in a bad condition. They insisted that it was necessary first, to place these things in good order, so as to continue the journey, and appear with elegance before their lady's future husband, lest, if they arrived badly equipped among the Goths, they should be laughed at." *

The Normans, who arrived with their short dresses and coats of mail, and became established in France about 972, adopted the costume of the French, which they followed in all its phases; and in the following century they began to introduce the fashions of the Continent into England. At the time of the Conquest, however, the custom generally prevailed among the Normans of shaving not only the beard, but the back of the head, as appears from the figures in the Bayeux tapestry.



Gisarme.

Norman Soldiers.—From the Bayeux Tapestry.

In the tenth and eleventh centuries the costume of the higher classes usually consisted of a long tunic, confined by a girdle, over which was a large cloak. The soldiers wore a short coat of mail over a tunic, which descended to the knees; their arms comprised the long-bow, the cross-bow, the sword, lance, buckler, and gisarme. The gisarme

Military Costumes of the 12th century.

* Gregory of Tours.

Norman Bowmen. 11th century.

is said to be the weapon called the brown bill by Chaucer. It was in general use in the 12th century, and was retained as late as the battle of Flodden.

The costume of the women of Normandy consisted of a simple head dress, with long robes girded about the waist.

Woman Spinning. From a MS. of the 12th century in the Royal Library of Brussels.

In paintings of this period the hair is seldom seen, but the manner in which it was worn appears to have varied.

Noble Ladies of Normandy. Costume of the 12th century.

Sometimes it is represented as gathered tightly about the head, and sometimes it descends in long plaits upon the shoulders. Princesses and ladies of rank wore a robe of ermine, or a tunic either with or without sleeves; a veil was also added, which covered the head, and descended in folds over the bosom.

After the death of Charlemagne, literature and the arts in France experienced a gradual decline until the tenth century, when a new and remarkable impetus was given to learning by the Arabs in Spain, whose literature, derived from that of Greece, was disseminated over the continent. English learning, which had flourished during the reigns of Alfred and his immediate successors, began rapidly to decay during the stormy period of the Danish invasions; and from the time of the accession of Canute to that of the Norman conquest, little or no revival of letters appears to have taken place. During the five hundred years which intervened between these two events, the country enjoyed a considerable degree of repose, and it can hardly be doubted that some of the schools and religious houses were re-established; but the long period of peace was marked by the growth of indolence and sensuality among the people rather than by the spread of education.

William the Conqueror, says a modern writer, "patronised and loved letters. He filled the bishoprics and abbacies of England with the most learned of his countrymen, who had been educated at the University of Paris, at that time the most flourishing school in Europe. Many of the Norman prelates preferred in England by the Conqueror were polite scholars. Godfrey, prior of St. Swithin's at Winchester, a native of Cambray, was an elegant Latin epigrammatist, and wrote with the smartness and ease of Martial; a circumstance which, by the way, shows that the literature of the monks at this period was of a more liberal cast than that which we commonly annex to their character and profession."

William founded the abbeys of Battle and Selby, with other religious houses, and endowed them with ample revenues. Many of his nobles were incited by his example to the erection of monasteries upon their estates. These institutions, which afforded leisure and protection to men of letters, acted as powerful incentives to the pursuit of learning, and promoted in no small degree the interest of literature.

The art of the sculptor had made little progress in Europe previous to the tenth century. Two centuries later the Burgundian school was in its zenith, and enriched the churches and monasteries of France with many admirable specimens of sculpture. Hughes, abbé of Cluny, had a magnificent tomb; Bernard II., abbé of Montier-Saint-Jean, in rebuilding the door of his church, caused it to be adorned with representations of the Saviour and the twelve apostles; and in other instances the arts were applied to decorate the religious houses, or the graves of the illustrious dead.

Sacramental Wafer Box. 12th century.

In Normandy we find at this period the names of several sculptors celebrated for their works. Among these was Otho, the sculptor of the tomb of William the Conqueror, in 1087, and other monuments of a similar kind; Azo, builder of the cathedral of Sens, and of several others. The masons and sculptors of Normandy formed at this epoch an important corporation.

At the beginning of the eleventh century, when the Normans became securely established in their conquests, they displayed the utmost activity in the erection of magnificent buildings, both in England and Normandy. According to William of Malmesbury,* churches rose up in every village, and monasteries in the towns and cities, built in a style unknown before. "You might behold ancient buildings restored upon their sites throughout the country, so that each wealthy man considered that day as lost to him, on which he neglected to perform some magnificent action."

The Anglo-Norman barons engaged in these works obtained from their own country and from France the assistance of the best architects and sculptors. Guillaume of Sens, one of these artists, reconstructed the cathedral of Canterbury in 1176; and other foreign artists were employed to restore the abbeys of Croyland, of York, of Wearmouth, and others. The character of the Norman architecture will be treated of hereafter.

While it is evident that results highly favourable to the progress of literature and the arts in this country were produced by the Norman conquest; there is also every reason to believe that the tendency to sensuality, which was so strong among the Saxon people, experienced a salutary check from the introduction of Norman manners. The foreign invasion entailed immediate sufferings upon the conquered race, but its results were favourable to the progress of civilisation, and tended in no small degree to the advance of the nation in power and greatness.

The Normans are understood to have introduced into England many elegancies and refinements in the habits of common life and customs of the table. It has been already stated that the Saxons were a people of gross appetite, who were accustomed to spend many hours of the day at feasts. The Normans, on the other hand, appear, on their arrival in England, to have distinguished themselves by the moderation and refinement of their mode of living. Among the dainties held in the highest esteem by the Normans were the peacock and the crane. The boar's head was considered a regal dish, and it was brought in at great feasts in a kind of procession, preceded by musicians.

It would appear that the improvements thus introduced were rather moral than material, as we find no mention made of new articles of furniture or other conveniences as having appeared at the time of the Conquest. Our information on this subject is, however, scanty, and it is probable that the improvement of taste and increased wealth were soon manifested in the application of the useful and decorative arts to the conveniences of domestic life.

A most faithful and valuable record of costumes and manners at the time of the Conquest, is to be found in the remarkable work known as the Bayeux Tapestry. It has been already stated that in the days of the Conqueror the Anglo-Saxon ladies were remarkable for their skill in ornamental needlework, and the embroidery of their manufacture was celebrated throughout Europe under the name of English work.

The Saxon nobles who accompanied William to the Continent after the battle of Hastings, are supposed to have taken with them their wives and daughters. It is probable that at this time Matilda, the wife of the Conqueror, assisted by English ladies as well as those of her own country, constructed the tapestry which has been preserved for ages in the town of Bayeux. Some degree of doubt must always rest upon the precise date and origin of the work, but the balance of opinion, among the best authorities, is in favour of the popular tradition which has always ascribed it to the wife of the Conqueror.

The Bayeux tapestry is a chronicle of the conquest of England by the Normans, opening with the mission of Harold to Duke William, and terminating with the battle of Hastings. The designs, which were probably the work of an Italian artist, are represented in worsted work, the colours of which, notwithstanding the great age of the tapestry, are still bright and distinct. The tapestry was placed at an early period in a side chapel of the cathedral of Bayeux, where it was regarded with veneration by the people. During the consulate of Napoleon, the ancient relic was removed from Bayeux to Paris, where it remained for several months, and was visited by the First Consul himself. At the present time the tapestry is preserved in the library of the town of Bayeux, and is exposed to view in glass cases.

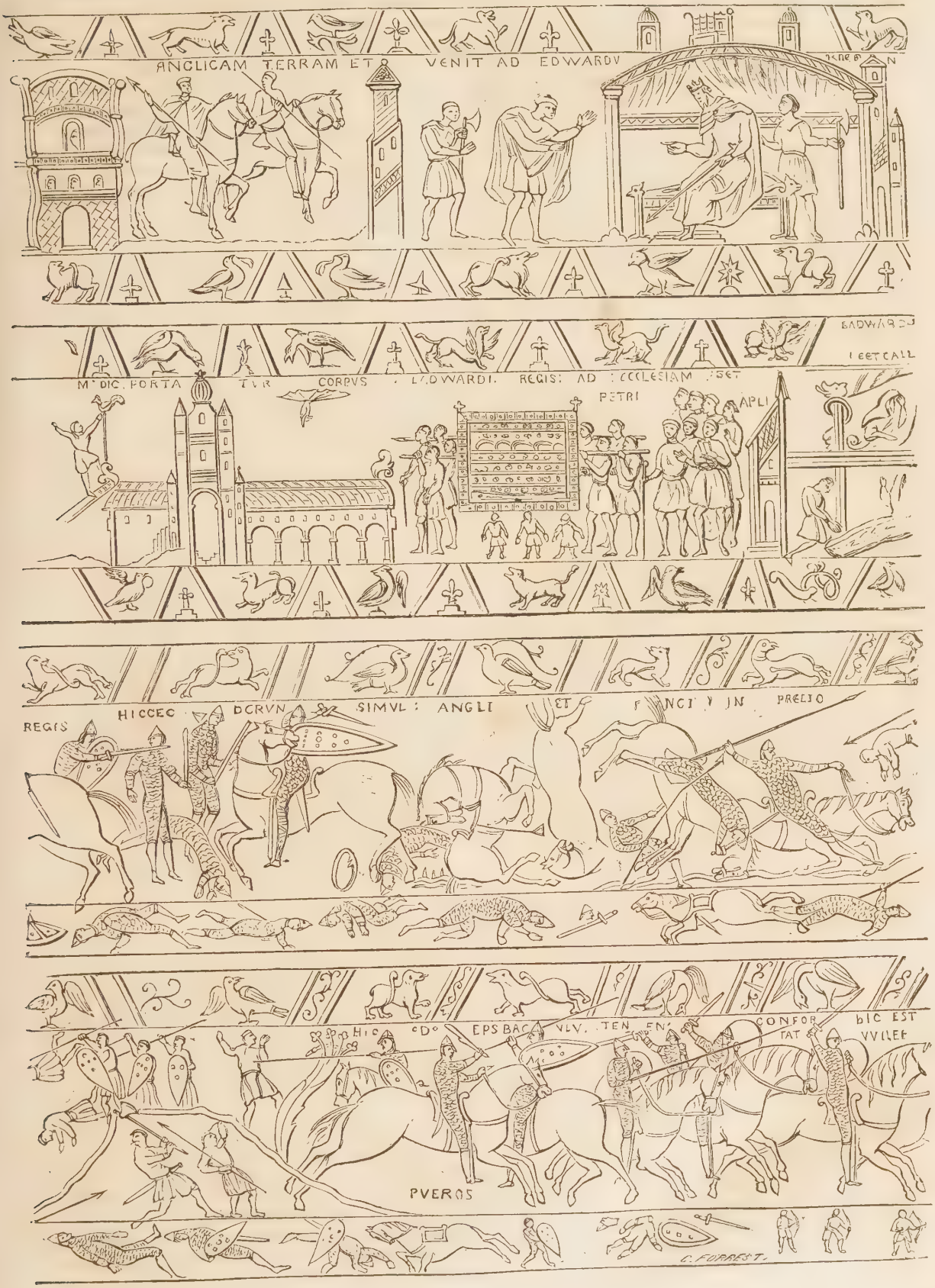
This remarkable monument of skill and industry originally formed one piece; and, according to a recent writer,* measures two hundred and twenty-seven feet in length, by about twenty inches in breadth. The groundwork of it is a strip of rather fine linen cloth, which, through age, has assumed the tinge of brown holland. The stitches consist of lines of coloured worsted laid side by side, and bound down at intervals by cross fastenings. The colours chiefly used by the fair artists are, dark and light blue, red, pink, yellow, buff, and dark and light green.

The central portion of the tapestry is occupied with the delineation of the narrative, and there is also an ornamental border at the top and bottom of the field, which contains figures of birds and beasts. Many of these are of fantastic shapes, and are, probably, meant to represent the dragons, griffins, and other fabulous creatures which are so often referred to in the romances of that period.

The two upper lines of the engraving of the tapestry (opposite page) are consecutive. They have been chosen for illustration as affording a favourable view of the character of the design. The story is taken up at the part where Harold, after swearing fealty to William of Normandy on the relics of the saints, returns to England, and presents himself to king Edward. The first words which occur over the figures at the top of the page are "*Anglicam terram.*" The complete sentence, the former part of which is omitted in the engraving, reads thus:—"*Hic Harold dux reversus est Anglicam terram:* Here the lord Harold returned to England." The horsemen of Harold's train are represented on their way to the court; "*Et venit ad Edwardum regem:* and came to Edward the king." Farther on we see Edward seated on his throne,

* The historical works of William of Malmesbury consist of seven books containing a record of the acts of the English kings, from the arrival of the Saxons to the time of the author's death, in the year 1143.

* The Rev. J. C. Bruce—"The Bayeux Tapestry Elucidated."


ANGLICAM TERRAM ET VENIT AD EDWARDV
EDWARD
PETRI
REGIS
HIC CEC
SIMVL : ANGLI
ET
PVEROS

and Harold receiving audience and communicating the ill-success of his mission.

Worn down by anxiety, and by the anticipations of evils which he foresaw, but was unable to prevent, Edward the Confessor soon afterwards died, and was buried at Westminster, in the church which he had himself built in a new and costly style of architecture. The tapestry shows us the church of St. Peter, at Westminster, and the funeral procession of the king. It will be observed that the church, which was built in the early Norman style, is provided at one end with a weather-cock, which a workman is represented in the act of putting up. "By this," says the authority already quoted, "the designer of the tapestry means to show that the work was but just completed, when the interment of the Confessor took place. A hand appears over the western end of the church to denote the finger of Providence, and to indicate that it was the will of God that the remains of the deceased king should be deposited in that building." The arrangements of the funeral procession are simple; a boy appears at each side of the bier ringing bells, and various attendants and priests are following. The words written above are,—"*Hic portatur corpus Edwardi regis ad ecclesiam sancti Petri Apostoli:* Here the body of king Edward is carried to the church of St. Peter the Apostle."

The two lower divisions of the preceding page are taken from another portion of the tapestry, and represent the battle of Hastings. The thick of the combat is here delineated, according to the inscription, "*Hic ceciderunt simul Angli et Franci in prelio*: Here at the same time English and French fell in the battle." Horses and men are tumbling about in the agonies of death. The mailed coats and pointed helmets of the Normans are easily distinguished from the Saxon costume. Further on we find a party of Saxons posted on a hill, who are making a desperate stand against the enemy with their lances. At a time when the fortune of the day seemed turning against the Normans, Odo of Bayeux galloped among the soldiers, and restored their drooping courage. He is represented in the tapestry with a staff, probably a badge of authority, and the inscription above is, "*Hic Odo episcopus tenens baculum confortat pueros:* Here bishop Odo, holding a staff, encourages the soldiers."

The last figure in the engraving is that of the duke of Normandy, who is represented at the head of his troops, waving his sword. The inscription runs—"*Hic est dux Wilhelm:* this is duke William."

The tapestry itself goes on to delineate other details of the battle; describes the place where Harold fell, and ends with the flight of the English before the conquering troops of Normandy.

Great Seal of Henry I.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Accession of Henry I., surnamed Beauclerk, A.D. 1100—Marriage of Henry with Matilda—Battle of Tenchebray—Imprisonment and Death of Robert of Normandy.

When the news of the death of William Rufus was brought to his brother Henry in the New Forest, the prince immediately set spurs to his horse and galloped to Winchester. Presenting himself before the officers in charge of the treasures of the crown, he demanded the keys; but before he had obtained them, William de Breteuil, the royal treasurer, who had followed Henry from the New Forest, arrived on the spot, and interposed his authority. De Breteuil reminded the prince of the oath of allegiance which they had both taken to Robert of Normandy, to whom also, as the eldest son of the Conqueror, the throne as well as the treasure by right belonged. A violent altercation took place, and Henry drew his sword and threatened De Breteuil with instant death unless the treasure was given up. Several nobles of the late king's court supported the demand, and the treasurer found himself compelled to abandon an opposition which proved entirely unavailing.

Henry, whose abilities had procured him the surname of Beauclerk, or the fine scholar, proved himself as prompt in action as skilful in design. He immediately distributed some of the jewels and money of the crown among his adherents and the clergy of Winchester, and with these gifts and promises still more lavishly bestowed, he secured a certain degree of popularity in the town. Having been acknowledged as king by the Witan, who were assembled in the neighbourhood, he hastened to London, when he again distributed large gifts among all those whose adhesion it

was necessary to obtain. So rapidly was all this accomplished, that on the 5th of August, three days after his brother's death, Henry was proclaimed king, and was crowned in Westminster Abbey by Maurice, bishop of London.

At the death of Lanfranc, the see of Canterbury had been given to Anselm, a monk of the abbey of Bec, in Normandy. When the privileges of the church were infringed by the exactions and persecutions of Rufus, Anselm made his escape from the country, to lay his complaint before the pope (A.D. 1098). He had travelled to Rome in the disguise of a pilgrim, with staff in his hand and scrip by his side, and was received with due honour by the pope. At the time of the accession of Henry, he still remained absent. The archbishopric of York had been vacant for several years, and Maurice was, therefore, the highest ecclesiastic in the kingdom.

It will be remembered that, by the treaty signed at Caen between Robert of Normandy and William Rufus, the crown of England devolved upon the survivor; but, while Henry was obtaining possession of the throne, Robert was not yet returned from the Holy Land. Soon after the fall of Jerusalem, the duke of Normandy had quitted Palestine and landed in Italy. Here he was received with high honour and welcome by the Norman barons who had conquered large possessions in that southern land. Passing through Apulia he was entertained at the castle of the count of Conversano, who was a relation of Robert Guiscard. The count received his guest with the utmost hospitality, and all the resources of a princely establishment were placed at his command. Within the castle were troubadours and jongleurs, mirth and music; without were broad plains and forests stocked with game, horses, and hounds in abundance, a beautiful landscape, and a sunny sky. It is not surprising that all these pleasures should attract a man of the character of the duke of Normandy, who had just escaped from the protracted hardships of the Crusade, and who was well disposed to enjoy that ease and self-indulgence which he believed himself to have earned. But the count of Conversano had a daughter; she was young, accomplished, and of great beauty. Robert fell in love with the lady Sibylla, and obtained her hand in marriage. Ignorant of the critical position of affairs in England, and probably troubling himself little about the future, the duke of Normandy lingered among the pleasures of Italy, while his more ambitious brother was firmly securing himself in the sovereignty he had usurped.

The Anglo-Saxon people are said to have been inclined in favour of Henry, from the circumstance of his having been born and educated in England. The advantage he thus possessed was improved to the utmost, and the new king exerted himself to obtain the good will of that portion of his subjects who, however trodden down and oppressed by the arrogant Norman barons, were, in fact, the strength and sinew of the nation. A charter of liberties was passed, in which Henry bound himself to restore the laws of Edward the Confessor, with such alterations as had been made by the Conqueror. This charter was the cause of great rejoicing among the people, and, though the effects produced by it were less advantageous than was expected, the charter is remarkable as having supplied the groundwork for that more important concession which was afterwards obtained from King John. At a subsequent period Henry retracted the promises he had made, and the copies of the royal charter, which had been placed in many of the churches throughout the kingdom, were seized and destroyed by the officers of the Crown. Three copies, however, were by some accident overlooked, and were left, one at Canterbury, one at York, and one at St. Albans.

These measures gave to Beauclerk a greater popularity than had been enjoyed by either of his predecessors. The nation had no fears of foreign invasion. Some of the most pressing grievances had been redressed, and strong hopes given of the removal of others; and, although several generations had to pass away before the distinction of Norman and Saxon was entirely to merge into the general name of Englishman, the process had already commenced: a process which, rousing the slumbering Saxon from the lethargy of years, and stimulating the energetic principles of the Norman character to their highest development, eventually gave birth to a series of events which placed England foremost in the rank of nations.

Such was the state of affairs when the new king, rejecting all thoughts of an alliance with any of the princely families of the continent, as the crowning act of reconciliation with his Saxon subjects, offered his hand to the exiled and portionless daughter of Malcolm, a humble novice in the abbey of Romsey, but the representative of a long and illustrious line of Saxon princes.

We have seen how, on the death of Edward the Confessor, Harold obtained possession of the crown; his defeat and death, and the ultimate flight of Edgar, "the noble child," as the Saxon chroniclers fondly term him, with his mother and sisters to Scotland. The results of this voyage, and the marriage of Margaret with the king of Scotland, have been already related.

Six children arrived at years of maturity. Edward, who was slain with his father at Alnwick; Edgar, Alexander, and David, who each in turn succeeded to the crown.

The daughters were named Mary, who married Eustace, count of Boulogne; and Matilda, or Maud, afterwards queen of Henry Beauclerk.

The death of Malcolm and his eldest son, which occurred in 1093, was soon followed by that of Margaret. The brother of Malcolm assumed the crown, to the exclusion of his three nephews, and to this cause we may doubtless attribute Matilda being sent, together with her sister, to the care of their aunt Christina, who had taken the veil in 1086.

Contemporary historians agree in naming Wilton and Romsey as the abbeys in which the future Queen of England found an asylum. They were both of Saxon foundation.

Wilton claimed an origin as early as the year 800, when Wulston, duke of Wiltshire, founded a chantry, which his widow Alburga converted into a nunnery, and which, in after years, became the residence of St. Editha, the fair and pious daughter of the profligate King Edgar.

Romsey abbey, to which Christina, the aunt of Matilda, retired, and of which, according to some writers, she became abbess, was built by Edward the elder, and dedicated to the Virgin and St. Elfleda. This convent possessed many extraordinary privileges, amongst others the rare and anomalous right of "la haute justice" or gallows tree; a privilege of which the records do not mention any use ever having been made. To this already wealthy and powerful establishment the Norman conquest, instead of spoliation, appears to have brought additional wealth and dignity.

ROBERT OF NORMANDY AT THE CASTLE OF THE COUNT OF CONVERSANO.

The abbess of this convent was one of the four lady abbesses in England who were baronesses in their own right, and as such took their place at the court of the king.

It would be a most interesting task to trace the outline of the plan of education pursued in these establishments; unfortunately the materials for such an undertaking are too scanty. From Alfred of Rieviesby, a cotemporary, we learn, that very young children were sometimes admitted, and that the nuns displayed towards them an almost maternal affection.

These children were taught reading, and in most instances writing. Music was also an important part of a conventual education, since all the scholars were expected to take their parts in the seven daily services of the church.

the people, while her refusal would certainly tend to increase the enmity between the Norman and Saxon races. It is one of the penalties attached to royalty, that those connections which, in a lower and happier sphere of life, are matters of choice and affection, become among princes mere questions of state policy. Maud felt herself unable to resist the arguments brought forward in favour of the match, and she gave an unwilling consent. An opposition on the other side meanwhile arose among the Norman adherents of Henry, who were ill-disposed to have a Saxon queen to reign over them, and were probably jealous of the effect such a marriage would produce among the people in the king's favour.

It was asserted that the chosen wife of the king was already the bride of heaven; that she had been seen to

Marriage of Henry and Matilda.

As Maud grew towards womanhood, more than one Norman chieftain had endeavoured to obtain her hand in marriage, but on preferring their request to William Rufus, that politic monarch had refused his consent. He did not wish to see a Saxon princess, a lineal descendant of Alfred the Great, allied to any man whose power or abilities might enable him to aspire to the throne. Maud, therefore, remained in the seclusion of the cloister until King Henry sent to her his proposals of marriage. It is related that the young princess received the offer with dislike, if not with disdain. She was not ignorant of the sufferings which the Norman invasion had brought upon her countrymen, and her sympathy with their sorrows induced a hatred of their oppressors. Her friends and attendants, however, combated these scruples, and argued that by her consent she might restore in some degree the safety and happiness of

wear the veil of a nun, which shut her out for ever from the world.

In this difficulty it was necessary for Henry to obtain the assistance of the clergy, and he therefore sent messengers to Anselm, entreating him to return to England, and resume the see of Canterbury. The king promised to restore the privileges of the church, and to submit to its authority. Anselm acceded to the request, and agreed to perform the marriage ceremony; but when he heard the reports in circulation that Matilda had taken the veil, he declared that the matter required to be investigated, and that he would himself examine the princess on the subject.

On the question being put to her, Maltilda denied that she had ever been dedicated to a religious life, or had worn the veil of her own consent. The reason she gave for

having been made to do so at particular times, gives a striking picture of the lawlessness and brutality of the Norman soldiery. "I confess," she said, "that I have sometimes appeared veiled, but the cause was this: in my youth I was under the care of my aunt Christina. She, in order to preserve me from the Normans, by whose licentiousness the honour of all women was threatened, was accustomed to throw a piece of black stuff over my head; and when I refused to wear it, she treated me with great harshness. In her presence, therefore, I wore that veil, but when she was away, I used to throw it on the ground, and trample upon it in childish anger."*

Anselm convoked a council of nobles and ecclesiastics, who assembled in the city of Rochester, and to whom the evidence given by Matilda was submitted. Witnesses were examined in support of her assertions, and the assembly decided that the princess was free to dispose of her person in marriage. They cited, as an authority for this decision, the judgment of archbishop Lanfranc, who, at a time when some Saxon women had taken refuge in a convent from fear of the soldiers of the Conqueror, permitted them to regain their liberty.

At the time of the coronation of Matilda, London could not have presented much to attract the eye. The convents were few, and the churches humble. The tall spire, rising like an aspiration towards heaven; the richly traceried window; the carved portal, did not yet exist to form a picturesque contrast with the rude, low houses built in irregular lines.

The Thames, crossed by one poor wooden bridge, was not then, as now, crowded by a fleet of merchantmen. At the Tower, the Vintry, and Edred's-hithe, a few small vessels, indeed, might be anchored; and from time to time some tall Norman galley might glide over its silvery waters.

On either side of the city, and close to the water's edge, stood the important fortresses of the Tower and Castle Baynard, whilst a rude collection of huts, of the poorest description, formed that general receptacle of thieves and outlaws, the Borough. Close to them stood the convent and church of St. Mary, and far beyond, on the same side of the river, rising above the marshes which surrounded it, might be seen the towers of the palace of Lambeth.

As the procession moved on, the eyes of the princess encountered a fairer spectacle; for, on quitting the village of Charing, she entered the broad but irregular road which led to the palace of Westminister, the residence of the sovereign of England. There the hand of improvement, guided by art, had lavished countless cost both on church and hall.

Although the authorities for describing the palace of Westminister are so scanty, a minute picture may be drawn of the abbey church in which Matilda was crowned, as it was finished by Edward the Confessor.

From the day when it was asserted that the church had been consecrated by the chief of the Apostles himself, amid the blaze of celestial light and the hallelujahs of angels, each monarch who in succession swayed the sceptre of England vied with his predecessors in gifts or immunities to this highly favoured abbey. The fishermen of the Thames, in full assurance of St. Peter's promise of prospering them in their calling, paid willingly their tithe of salmon; and continued to do so nearly to the time of the Reformation. Spoorly relates that in 1382 he saw a large fish presented by four fishermen on the high altar. He also adds, that they who offered it might demand for it bread and ale of the cellarer of the abbey; and had a right to sit at the prior's own table.

Such was the church where Matilda, surrounded by the great officers of state, and cheered on her way by the rejoicing Saxons, was conducted to receive the crown matrimonial of England, the inheritance of her race.

Beside the primate was a churchman of a very different character, Roger, bishop of Sarum, the king's chancellor. The history of his progress under royal favour is strikingly characteristic of the man and the times in which he flourished.

At the period when Henry was fighting under the banner of his brother, William Rufus, with a troop of mercenaries whom he headed, they entered a church near Caen, and requested the priest whom they found there to say a mass as quickly as possible.

This priest was Roger, who promptly complied with their request, and hurried over the service in so rapid a manner that they unanimously declared that it would be impossible to find a priest more suitable for a soldier's chaplain. In this new office, Roger acquitted himself so well that Henry, on his accession, advanced him to the chancellorship, and to the see of Sarum. His last years afforded a remarkable instance of the versatility of fortune. After munificently expending immense sums on his cathedral at Old Sarum, and upon the rebuilding of Malmesbury Abbey, which noble church still presents so fine a specimen of the Norman style, and seeing two nephews bishops of Lincoln and Ely, on the accession of Stephen he fell into deep disgrace, and when, in his last illness, he was permitted to retire to Sarum, even his expiring moments were disturbed by plundering foemen, who carried away the remaining gold and jewels he possessed.*

Henry I., from a Statue in the Choir of York Cathedral.

Of the principal nobles of England and Normandy it is probable that only a few were present. Some were in the Holy Land with Robert; others, dissatisfied at the usurpation of his younger brother, remained in their respective castles, silently preparing to assert the right of the lawful heir to the throne. Amongst those, however, who adhered to Henry, was the famous Roger de Bigod, who had obtained vast possessions both in Norfolk and Suffolk; whilst another devoted friend of the new king was the powerful earl of Chester, lord of the Welsh marches, and commonly called Hugh Lupus, on account of his turbulent disposition.

* Eadmer.

* Malmesbury.

The marriage was celebrated on the 11th of November, 1102, and the new queen was crowned amidst the acclamations of the people. Previous to the ceremony Anselm, who wished to leave no room for slanderous reports, and to remove all doubts of the lawfulness of the marriage, mounted a platform before the church door, and explained the question which had been disputed, and the decision of the council, to the assembled people.

The Normans, however, who had raised the opposition to the marriage, and many of whom were secret adherents of Duke Robert, vented their ill-humour in bitter railleries and jests. They gave Henry the nickname of Godrik, and his queen they called Godiva—names which were Saxon, and were applied to the royal couple in derision. It is related by an old historian, that Henry heard all these things, but that he dissembled his anger, and pretended to laugh heartily at the jests.

Soon after his marriage the king commenced proceedings against several of the most vicious of his brother's favourites, whom he despoiled of their ill-gotten possessions, and either expelled them from the country, or threw them into prison. During the time he had been attached to his brother's court, Henry had taken part in the debaucheries which there prevailed; and it is probable that the punishment of his former associates was dictated, not by any regard for the interests of virtue, but, rather, from a deference to the wishes of the people; while, at the same time, he was enabled to fill the royal coffers with the treasures of the banished lords. Foremost among the proscribed was Ralph Flambard, the minister of Rufus, who had been made bishop of Durham, and who had amassed large possessions, by extortions, and a selling of justice. Flambard was seized and thrown into the Tower, whence he effected his escape by means of a rope which was conveyed to him by some of his friends in a flagon of wine. Having made his way to the coast, he crossed the channel, and entered the service of Robert of Normandy.

When Robert at length returned to his dukedom with his bride Sibylla, he was received with acclamation by the inhabitants, and soon expressed the intention of enforcing his claim to the crown of England; but, with his accustomed procrastination, he took no immediate steps to that end, but occupied his time with feasts and tournaments. When at length he was aroused to enter upon the expedition he had planned, he was supported not only by the resident Norman barons, but also by many of those who had settled in England, and who agreed to join their forces to his standard. Among these was the Earl of Surrey, William de Warrenne, Robert de Pontefract, Hugh de Grantmesnil, Robert de Malet, and Robert de Belesme, earl of Shrewsbury.

On the other hand, Henry was strong in the support of the English people, and a party of the Norman nobility. Archbishop Anselm, with other prelates, rendered the king important service, and secured to Henry the support of the pope. There appears to be little doubt that Anselm was a conscientious man, and that if he adhered to the cause of the usurper, he did so from a sincere desire to establish the liberties of the people, and from a conviction that the rule of Henry, who had pledged himself to promote the welfare of his subjects, was preferable to that of the weak and luxurious duke of Normandy.

Henry fitted out a fleet for the purpose of intercepting the duke in his voyage across the channel; but the English sailors, from some cause which has not been entirely explained, deserted from their allegiance, and carried the ships over to the service of Robert.

There was something in the character of the duke of Normandy,—in his brilliant feats of courage; in his reckless generosity, and careless way of life,—which had an attraction for the minds of sailors; and it is probable, also, that they were influenced by the intrigues of Ralph Flambard. The desertion was an important service to the duke, and the fleet which had been designed to oppose his landing, served to convey the invading troops to the English shores.

Robert landed with his army at Portsmouth, and was immediately joined by many barons and knights of Norman birth; the clergy, however, and the private soldiers remained faithful to the cause of the king. Several days elapsed before the rival forces came within sight of each other; and in the meanwhile some of the Norman barons acted as mediators between the two brothers, and succeeded in arranging terms of peace. Robert agreed to resign his claim to the crown of England for a yearly pension of two thousand pounds of silver; and it was decided that the adherents of either side should be pardoned, and that their possessions, confiscated by the king or the duke, should be immediately restored. A clause was also added, to the effect that whichever of the two brothers might survive the other should succeed to his title and dominions. The effusion of blood was thus stayed for the moment, and Robert returned with his army to Normandy, A.D. 1103.

Finding himself securely in possession of the throne, Henry was disposed to revoke some of the concessions which he had made to Anselm, for the purpose of securing the support of that prelate. The king demanded that he should do homage for the archbishopric of Canterbury, and Anselm having returned a decided refusal, a dispute arose which lasted over several years. In the first instance the question was referred to the pope, Pascal II., who decided that all ecclesiastics should enter the church without the authority of laymen, of however high degree. Henry persisted in maintaining his prerogative, and required Anselm either to do homage or once more to quit the kingdom. The archbishop remained firm, and the king, who did not desire an open rupture with the church, sent three bishops to Rome to negotiate with the pope. Anselm at the same time sent two monks as messengers of his own. It is stated by Eadmer, the biographer of Anselm, that the pope had recourse to a strange expedient to evade the difficulty in which he found himself. He refused to communicate with the three bishops in writing, but informed them verbally that he ceded the right of investiture to the king: while he gave letters to the two monks, in which he supported the opposition of Anselm, and desired him to continue that course of action.

On the return of the messengers to London, an assembly was convened, at which they delivered the report of their journey. The word of the three bishops was accepted by the king in preference to the written testimony produced by the monks, and though the pope affirmed that the evidence of the bishops was false, and, moreover, excommunicated them as liars, Henry persisted in his line of policy, and invested new bishops with the sees of Hereford and Salis-

bury. Anselm obtained permission to go himself to Rome for the purpose of terminating the dispute, A.D. 1103.

The archbishop remained abroad several years, during which negotiations were carried on. Ultimately, a compromise was agreed to, by the terms of which the investiture was to be conferred by the church, while the bishops and other dignitaries were to do homage to the king for the temporal possessions attached to their benefices.

After the return of Anselm, a number of canons were passed by a council of the church, enforcing upon the clergy the obligation of celibacy. Lanfranc had previously exerted himself to promote this object, though with only partial success; and Anselm now proceeded to enforce the same measures. Those priests who were married were commanded to separate from their wives, whom they were never again to see except in the presence of witnesses. Any who might refuse compliance were to be excommunicated and deposed from the order.

In the year 1109, Anselm died at the age of seventy-six. He was a man of considerable ability and erudition; the evidences of which may be found in his writings, which are still extant. He exerted himself to establish schools, and to promote the spread of knowledge throughout the country, and the news of his death was received with general regret among the people.

The treaty which had been signed between Henry and Robert in no degree affected the policy of the king, who showed himself as unscrupulous and careless of his plighted faith, as had been his brother Rufus. Determined to punish those barons who had supported the duke of Normandy, and whose power and position rendered their disaffection a matter to be dreaded, Henry took measures calculated to excite them to some overt act of rebellion, which would enable him to proceed against them without the shame of a direct violation of the treaty. The first who became the object of attack was Robert de Belesme, earl of Shrewsbury, who held large possessions as well in Normandy as in England. De Belesme was summoned before the general assembly held in the king's palace, to answer forty-five charges which were brought against him. On appearing before the council, the earl, according to the custom of the time, demanded leave to go and consult with his friends respecting his accusation, and the conduct of his defence. The permission having been granted, the earl immediately quitted the court, took horse, and galloped off to one of his fortified castles.

The king and the council having waited in vain for his answer to the charges, made proclamation of outlawry against him, and declared him a public enemy unless he

Henry I.

returned and appeared before the court at its next sitting. Robert de Belesme made no answer to the summons, but prepared energetically for war, and collected large quantities of stores of provisions in his castles of Arundel, Shrewsbury, and Tickehill. Bridgenorth, on the frontier of Wales, was also strongly fortified.

Henry advanced against his rebellious vassal with an army, a large part of which was composed of English troops, who marched with alacrity to punish the proud Norman baron. After having obtained possession of the castle of Arundel, Henry marched against Bridgenorth, where the earl had entrenched himself. For several weeks the king had besieged the town without result, when some of the Norman barons undertook to arrange terms of peace, as they had already done in the case of Robert of Normandy.

Many of the barons waited upon king Henry, and demanded a conference, or *parlement*, for the purpose of arranging terms of peace. The plain on which the assembly met was bounded by hills, on which were posted a large body of English troops. These, who had been informed of the object of the conference, called out loudly to the king, "Place no faith in them, king Henry: they want to lay a snare for you: we will give thee our assistance, and will follow thee to the assault. Make no peace with the traitor until he falls into thy hands." The warning appears to have produced its effect, and no reconciliation took place between the belligerents. The fortress of Bridgenorth at length capitulated, and the king's forces marched through a densely wooded country to attack the earl in his stronghold of Shrewsbury. A short interval elapsed, and then this fortress, also, was taken, and earl Robert, who was made a prisoner, was banished from the country, with the forfeiture of the whole of his estates. Other nobles, who had adhered to the cause of Robert of Normandy, were afterwards prosecuted, and met with a similar fate to that of the earl of Shrewsbury.

The English troops of Henry had long sought for an opportunity of vengeance upon the oppressors of their country, and they might not unreasonably feel elated at the victories they had obtained over the Norman insurgents. It does not appear, however, that the nation at large derived any benefit from the suppression of the rebellion. Although Henry was of English birth, and had married a Saxon wife, his sympathies were not with the people whom he governed. The old historians tell us that the good queen Matilda used all the influence she possessed to advance the happiness and secure the liberties of her countrymen, but it does not appear that her counsel and entreaties produced any effect upon the conduct of the king. The condition of the people soon after the marriage of Henry with Matilda, is thus described in the Saxon chronicle:—"It is no easy matter to relate all the miseries with which the land was at this time afflicted, by unjust and continual exactions. Wherever the king went, those in his train oppressed the people, and were guilty of murders and incendiary fires in many places."

Amidst the vices of Robert of Normandy, he possessed a nice sense of honour which we rarely find recorded of the men of that age, and which was still more rare in the family of the Conqueror. No sooner did he hear of the rebellion of De Belesme in England, than he took possession of the earl's Norman estates, and gave them up to pillage. To this line of conduct Robert considered himself pledged, by the terms of the treaty he had signed with Henry. When, however, the king extended his persecutions to other Norman barons, Robert perceived that they were punished for their adherence to himself; and the duke, without hesitation, came over to England, accompanied only by a small escort, and placed himself unreservedly in his brother's power, for the purpose of pleading the cause of the proscribed nobles.

At this time Robert resigned his pension of two thousand pounds. According to some historians, he was detained by Henry as a prisoner, and the pension was the price paid by the duke for his liberty; while another account states that the sum was given as a present to the queen Matilda. It is, however, certain that Robert soon returned to Normandy without having succeeded in the object of his visit.

There was no sentiment of fraternal affection in the breast of Henry Beauclerk. Regardless of the acts of forbearance and generosity which he had experienced at different times from his brother, the king sought every opportunity of injuring him, and of accomplishing his ruin. The duke of Normandy was of an easy, trustful, and merciful temper, and was ill-fitted to restrain the excesses of his turbulent barons, or to hold with a firm hand the reins of government. Many disorders and abuses sprung up in his duchy, and were left unnoticed or unpunished by the sovereign. The fair Sibylla died A.D. 1102, and since that time the duke had resumed his irregular way of life, and had shown more completely than before his utter incapacity for the management of public affairs.

King Henry took advantage of this state of things to interfere in the disputes of the Norman barons; and, after appearing for a time in the character of a mediator, he at length threw off the mask and declared himself the protector of the duchy against the mal-administration of his brother. He summoned Robert to give up possession of the duchy in return for an annual payment of money. The duke indignantly refused to comply with the demand, and Henry prepared to dispossess his brother by force.

In the year 1105 the king entered Normandy with an army, and obtained possession of several castles and fortified places. Robert, however, was not without means of defence; some few chiefs of power and influence still remained attached to his cause, and Henry returned to England without having obtained a decisive victory.

A second campaign was opened in the following year, and Henry crossed the channel with a more formidable armament than before. He appeared before Tenchebray, an important stronghold situated at a few leagues distance from Mortain. Having in vain attempted to corrupt the garrison with gold, the king laid siege to the castle with his whole army. Messengers came to Robert with the news that his faithful troops were hard pressed by the enemy, and the duke promised that, in defiance of every obstacle, he would come on a certain day to their assistance.

The promise was redeemed, and, at the time appointed, the duke, with a small but gallant band of troops, attacked the army of his brother. Placing himself at the head of his knights, he dashed in upon the English infantry, which gave way before him in disorder. So impetuous was the charge, that the fortune of the day seemed likely to be in favour of Robert, when the cowardice or treachery of the earl of Shrewsbury turned the tide of affairs. De Belesme,

whose troops formed an important division of the army of the duke, suddenly fled from the field. A panic ensued among the Normans, and the brilliant deeds of valour performed by their leader failed to restore their courage or to secure the victory. After a desperate resistance, Robert was taken prisoner, with many of the chief nobles who had fought under his banner.

stood near to that of Gloucester, and had recently been conquered from the Welsh. At first some degree of liberty was permitted to him, and he was allowed to take exercise among the fields and woods of the neighbourhood. On one occasion, however, he made an attempt to escape on horseback, but he was pursued and taken in a marsh, which he had attempted to cross in his flight. It is related by some

Robert of Normandy a Prisoner in Cardiff Castle.

Edgar Atheling also fell into the hands of Henry. At the instance of the queen, his niece, a pension was granted to him, and he is related to have passed the rest of his days on a small farm in England, where he lived in obscurity, and no historian has noted the time of his death or the place of his burial.

A.D. 1107.—A harder fate was reserved for the duke of Normandy. He was confined in Cardiff Castle, which

historians that, to prevent the possibility of another attempt of the same kind, the king ordered his brother's sight to be destroyed by a painful operation. In this miserable condition, with light and liberty alike shut out, the once gay and gallant duke of Normandy lingered on for twenty-eight years without quitting his prison. He died A.D. 1135.

After the victory of Tenchebray, the whole of Normandy

fell into the hands of Henry. Rouen, the capital, submitted without resistance to the conqueror, and the town of Falaise capitulated after a siege of short duration. Among the prisoners taken at Falaise was William, the only son of Robert and Sibylla. Some feeling of pity seems to have entered the breast of the king when his nephew, then a child of five years old, was brought before him. He committed the prince to the care of Helie de St. Saen, a Norman nobleman of high character, who had married a natural daughter of Robert. Soon afterwards, however, Henry attempted to secure the person of his nephew, and sent a body of troops to the castle of St. Saen for that purpose. Helie, who feared some evil intention on the part of the king, effected his escape, and carried his young charge to the court of Louis VI., king of France. On the way Helie passed some time at the courts of the most powerful Norman barons, and at that of Fulk, earl of Anjou, by whom, as well as by Louis, the prince was received with kindness and protection. He was brought up in the palace of the French king, who, as he grew up, presented him with horses and the harness of a knight, while Fulk promised to give him his daughter Sybilla in marriage.

Matilda, Queen of Henry I.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Reign of Henry I. continued—Battle of Brenneville—Death of Prince William son of Henry I.—Career of William of Normandy—Second Marriage and Death of Henry I.

Louis, who dreaded the power of the king of England, saw the advantage he might obtain by supporting the legitimate claims of William Fitz-Robert, or William of Nor-

mandy, as he was afterwards called. In the name of the young prince he entered into a league with the chiefs of some of the neighbouring states, among whom was the earl of Flanders. Henry was attacked at various points along the frontiers of Normandy, and some of his fortresses and towns were taken. At the same time, many Norman barons, who were secretly attached to the cause of duke Robert, engaged in a conspiracy against Henry. For several years the king never retired to bed without ordering a sword and buckler to be placed beside his pillow. At length he succeeded by policy in dissolving the league against him. A treaty was signed by which the estates of Helie de St. Saen were given to Fulk of Anjou, to whose daughter Matilda Henry agreed to marry his own son William. The contract of marriage between Sybilla and the son of Robert was broken off, and the cause of the latter was no longer to be supported by the earl of Anjou. William of Normandy retired to the court of Baldwin, earl of Flanders, who was one of the warmest supporters of his cause.

Having brought these negotiations satisfactorily to an end, for which purpose he had spent two years in Normandy, Henry returned to England. The sums which had been expended by the king in obtaining the submission of the friends of William, were obtained by heavy burdens and exactions from the people of England. Each year is described as being attended with its peculiar calamity, and in the year 1110 the sufferings of the people were heavy, "caused by the failure of the crops and the taxes demanded by the king for the dowry of his daughter."*

This daughter, who bore her mother's name of Matilda, was at that time only five years old. By the feudal laws the king was entitled to levy a tax on the marriage of his eldest daughter, and Matilda was betrothed to Henry V., emperor of Germany, who had sent ambassadors to demand her hand. The nominal rank of the German emperor was high, but the country over which he ruled was poor, and the prince himself not unfrequently kept state with empty coffers. He demanded a large dowry, which, after some delay, was seized rather than collected from the English people, and the young princess was committed to the hands of the ambassadors, who conducted her "with all honour" to Germany, where she was to receive her education. Her embarkation was a splendid sight, and is described in glowing terms by contemporary historians, but the people could not forget "how dear all this had cost the English nation,"† and Matilda's unpopularity in after years might in some degree be traced to the circumstances which had attended her marriage.

About the year 1111, the Welsh made incursions into the English counties on their borders, and overran the whole of Cheshire, causing great distress and damage to the inhabitants. Henry advanced against them, and as they retreated before him, he followed them to the fastnesses of the mountains, defeating them whenever he could find an opportunity of engaging them in battle. As had been the case with his father the Conqueror, and his brother Rufus, Henry found himself unable to subdue a people whose home was among trackless mountains and dangerous morasses, and he contented himself with building a chain of forts or castles a little further into the country than those erected by his predecessors. He also brought over a number of Flemings, to whom he gave a district of Pembrokeshire, with the town of Haverfordwest. These people were at once industrious and warlike, and they maintained themselves in prosperity in their new colony, in spite of repeated attacks made upon them by the Welsh.

In the year 1118 the queen Matilda died, "with the sad reflection that she had sacrificed herself for her race in vain."* Of this unhappy lady the historians of the time record no acts which were not gentle and womanly, and she appears to have merited the affection of the people, and that title of "the Good" which they conferred upon her. For the last twelve years of her life she was neglected by her husband, and lived in the palace of Westminster, surrounded by the pomp and state of royalty, but not the less friendless and alone. She passed much of her time engaged in exercises of devotion, and it is related of her that her chief recreation consisted in listening to the songs and the stories of minstrels, whom the spirit of chivalry prompted to offer their tribute to her virtues and misfortunes.

Meanwhile a dangerous confederacy was forming on the continent among the adherents of William of Normandy. Henry had neglected, in almost every instance, to perform the promises which he had made to the Norman barons; and he had refused to conclude the match which had been agreed upon between his son William and the daughter of Fulk, earl of Anjou. Louis of France, who still extended his favour and support to the son of Robert, entered into a league with Fulk of Anjou and Baldwin of Flanders, for the purpose of wresting the dukedom of Normandy from the possession of Henry. The first campaign was favourable to the arms of the English king, who successfully defended his territory against the attacks of the allies. Louis then determined to demand the assistance of the ecclesiastical power. A council of the clergy was convoked at Rheims, at which the pope Calixtus II. was present, and thither the king of France carried the young prince, and presenting him to the council, craved its assistance on his behalf. Louis addressed an eloquent speech to the pope, in which he dwelt upon the unjust and merciless character of the king of England, who not only refused to his nephew those possessions which belonged to him of right, but who also retained his brother the duke of Normandy in solitary and endless imprisonment. Henry, who had been apprised of the purpose of the council, sent costly presents to the pope and the clergy, and subsequently had an interview with Calixtus, at which similar inducements were employed with success. The council looked with coldness on the suit of Louis, and refused him the assistance he demanded.

The friends of William of Normandy continued the war with vigour, and Henry experienced several reverses. At the siege of Eu, Baldwin, earl of Flanders, the most energetic and determined of the allies, was killed; and finding himself thus freed from one formidable foe, Henry determined to get rid of another by means which, on a former occasion, had proved efficacious. He sent messengers to the earl of Anjou, proposing that the marriage between his son and the earl's daughter should take place immediately; a bribe of money was also added. The earl accepted the terms, withdrew his forces from those of the king of France, and the marriage soon afterwards took place.

* Chron. Saxon. † Ibid.

* Sir James Mackintosh.

The cause of the allies now rapidly lost ground. The less powerful barons, wearied with the ill success of their arms, or induced by presents, which were distributed with a lavish hand by Henry, deserted one after the other, until the French king was left to sustain the struggle almost unsupported. During the desultory warfare which was carried on between the opposing forces, an engagement took place, which has been honoured with the title of the battle of Brenneville, and which has been cited as a curious example of the mode of warfare common at that time.

Louis having laid a scheme for surprising the town of Noyou, Henry marched to the relief of the place, and encountered a portion of the French army at Brenneville. On the side of the French were four hundred knights, while king Henry was attended by somewhat more than that number. William of Normandy, at the head of a body of the French, made a gallant charge upon his opponents, and penetrated through their ranks to the place where Henry was standing. The English king was struck on the head by Crispin, a Norman soldier, who had followed the fortunes of William. Henry, however, was rather excited than injured by the blow, and he struck his adversary to the ground, following up his advantage with other feats of gallantry. By this means he encouraged his troops, and after an obstinate conflict the French were beaten off, with the loss of their standard and one hundred and forty knights, who were taken prisoners. The number of dead in this engagement amounted only to two, or, as some say, to three knights. At this period the cavalry were encased in heavy armour, which almost secured the wearers from blows of sword or lance, while, according to the usages of chivalry, all knights, on whichever side they fought, were regarded as one brotherhood, and the object aimed at in battle was not to despatch an adversary, but to take him prisoner. These circumstances account for the number of dead being unusually small as compared with the number engaged; though in the battle of Brenneville the proportion of the former seems to be less than in any other engagement on record.

Shipwreck of Prince William, Son of Henry I.

The chivalrous courtesies which at this period were common on the field of battle, present a striking contrast to those deeds of inhuman barbarity which at intervals stained the records of the age, and covered the perpetrators with infamy. Juliana, an illegitimate daughter of Henry, had been married to Eustace of Breteuil, who afterwards showed symptoms of disaffection to the government of his father-in-law. The king demanded as hostages two children of the marriage, and in return a son of Harenc, one of his nobles, was placed in the hands of Eustace. In a moment of rage De Breteuil put out the eyes of the child of Harenc, and in this condition sent him to his father. Harenc demanded vengeance at the hands of the king, and

the latter, in reply, informed him that he might avenge himself upon the children of Eustace, who were Henry's own grandchildren. The infuriated Harenc immediately acted upon the suggestion, and neither the youth nor innocence of the children saved them from a barbarous mutilation. Their eyes were torn out and their noses cut off. Juliana, their mother, driven to madness by this act of cruelty, watched an opportunity and discharged an arrow at the breast of her father. Her aim, however, was unsteady; the shaft took no effect, and Henry caused his daughter to be subjected to a humiliating punishment.

The battle of Brenneville was followed by a treaty of peace, which was arranged by the intervention of the pope Calixtus, between Louis and Henry. By this treaty the interests of William Fitz-Robert were entirely set aside, and the whole of the duchy of Normandy was to remain in the hands of Henry, whose son William was to render homage to Louis for the possession of the duchy. By this means the king of England evaded declaring himself a vassal of the king of France, an act which as duke of Normandy he was called upon to perform.

Henry carried his son William into Normandy, where he received his first arms, and was acknowledged as king Henry's successor by the barons. He also obtained the hand of the daughter of Fulk of Anjou. The bride was a child of twelve years old, and the prince had but just passed his eighteenth year. These various matters being accomplished, and peace established on a tolerably secure footing, king Henry prepared to return to England, A.D. 1120.

The fleet was assembled at Barfleur, and at the moment when the king was about to embark, a man named Thomas Fitz-Stephen advanced to speak with him, and, offering a mark of gold, said, "Stephen, the son of Erard, my father, served all his life thy father by sea, and he steered the vessel which carried the duke to the conquest of England. My lord the king, I pray thee to appoint me to the same office. I have a ship called *La Blanche-Nef*,* which is well-rigged and fully manned." The king answered that, as regarded himself, the choice of a ship was already made, but that he would entrust the petitioner with the care of his two sons and his daughter, with the nobles and attendants of their train. The vessel in which Henry embarked then set sail with a fair wind, and reached the English coast in safety on the following morning. On board the Blanche-Nef were the prince, his half-brother Richard, and their sister the lady Marie, or Adela, countess of Perche, with other nobles of England and Normandy to the number of 140 persons, besides fifty sailors. Before setting sail three casks of wine were distributed among the crew by the prince's order; and several hours were spent carousing, during which many of the crew drank themselves "out of their wits." After nightfall, and when the moon had risen brightly, the vessel left her moorings, and proceeded with a soft and favourable breeze along the coast. Fifty skilful rowers propelled her on her way, and the helm was held by Fitz-Stephen. The sailors, excited with wine, pulled stoutly, so as to overtake the vessel of the king, when suddenly they found themselves entangled among some rocks then called the Ras de Catte, and now known as the Ras de Catteville. The Blanche-Nef struck on one of the rocks, and immediately began to fill. The cry of terror which broke from the startled revellers, passed through the calm night air, and reached the king's ship, at a distance of several miles. Those who heard it, however little suspected its meaning, and passed on their way unconscious of the catastrophe which had taken place so near to them.

As the ship struck, the stout-hearted captain hastily lowered a boat, and placing the prince with a few of his friends therein, entreated him to make for the shore without delay. The devotion of Fitz-Stephen was, however, without avail. William heard the screams of his sister Marie, who had been left on board the vessel, and he commanded the boat to be put back to save her. When the order was obeyed, the terrified passengers threw themselves into the boat in such numbers, that the frail bark was immediately upset, and all who were in it perished. In a few moments more the ship was also engulfed beneath the waters. The only trace which remained of the wreck was the main-yard, to which two men clung with the tenacity of despair; one of these was a butcher of Rouen, named Berauld, and the other a young man of higher birth, named Godfrey, the son of Gilbert de l'Aigle.

Fitz-Stephen, the captain, after falling into the water, rose to the surface, and swam towards the two men who were clinging to the spar. "The king's son," he cried, "what has become of him?" "We have seen nothing of him," was the reply; "neither he nor any of his companions have appeared above water." "Woe is me!" the captain exclaimed, and immediately sank to rise no more. It was in the month of December, and the coldness of the water fast numbed the limbs of the younger of the two survivors, who at length let go his hold, and committing his companion to the mercy of Heaven, disappeared beneath the waves. Berauld, the butcher, the poorest of all those who had set sail in the Blanche-Nef, was the only one who survived to tell the story of the shipwreck. Wrapped in his sheepskin coat he supported himself until daybreak, when he was seen by some fishermen, who rescued him from his perilous situation.

The news reached England on the following day, but no man dared to tell the king of his bereavement. At length the courtiers tutored a little boy, who was sent in to the

King Henry bewailing the Loss of his Children. From an illumination engraved in "Strutt's Ecclesiastical Antiquities."

* The white ship.

king, and, falling at his feet, told him of the loss of the Blanche-Nef, with all on board. Henry is said to have fainted at the news, and the historians agree in dwelling upon the grief he felt at the news—a grief so rooted that he was never afterwards seen to smile.

The English people appear to have regarded the shipwreck as a judgment of Heaven upon the vices of the prince and the cruelties of his father. This view was strengthened by the circumstance that the disaster took place, not in a storm, but on a calm sea and under a tranquil sky. The character of prince William is represented by the chroniclers as that of a tyrannical and licentious youth. He is said to have detested the people from whom his own mother was descended, and to have declared that when he became king he would bend the necks of the Saxons to the plough, and treat them like beasts of burden. "The proud youth," says Henry of Huntingdon, a contemporary writer, "he was anticipating his future reign, but God said, 'Not so, thou impious one; it shall not be.' And thus it happened, that his brow, instead of being encircled with a crown of gold, was dashed against the rocks of the ocean." It is possible, however, that the historians gave too much importance to the light words of a heedless youth, and we may well be cautious in covering with infamy the name of one, the last and best authenticated act of whose life was at least noble and generous.

On the death of prince William, the earl of Anjou sent messengers to Henry, demanding back his daughter Matilda, together with the dowry which had been given to the king on her marriage. Henry willingly consented to the return of the princess to her father, but refused to give up any part of the money. Fulk was thus furnished with a pretext for renewing his former connection with William of Normandy, on whose future prospects the death of his cousin might exercise considerable influence. The son of duke Robert was placed by Fulk in possession of the earldom of Mans, and was again betrothed to Sybilla, the younger daughter of the earl. Henry, who was fully apprised of these proceedings, passed over into Normandy, and, after a year of desultory warfare, he made prisoners several of the chief Norman barons, and detached Fulk of Anjou once more from the cause of William.

In the year 1121, while Henry was still engaged in this war, he married Alice, Adelais, or Adelicia, daughter of Geoffrey, duke of Louvain, and nearly related to the pope Calixtus II. The new queen was "a lady of excellent beauty" and young, but no children resulted from the marriage, and Henry found himself compelled to resign the hope of leaving an heir male to his crown. In 1126 his daughter Matilda became a widow, by the death of her husband, Henry V. of Germany, and the king then determined to appoint her his successor to the throne of England and the dukedom of Normandy.

Since the time of the ancient Britons, no female sovereign had borne rule in England, and the native English as well as the Normans were altogether opposed to a scheme whose object was to place them under the government of a woman. The power of Henry was, however, so firmly established that the barons, who murmured in secret, did not dare openly to resist his will. Those among them who had the greatest influence were conciliated by grants of land; the assistance of the clergy was already secured; and on Christmas-day, A.D. 1126, a general assembly of the nobles and higher ecclesiastics of the kingdom was convened at Windsor Castle, for the purpose of declaring the empress Matilda (as she was still called) the legitimate successor to the throne. The clergy and the Norman barons of both countries unanimously swore allegiance to her, in the event of the king's death. Several disputes as to precedence took place on the occasion, and one of these was remarkable as having an importance beyond the mere question of court etiquette. Robert, earl of Gloucester, who was an illegitimate son of the king, demanded to take the oath before Stephen, earl of Boulogne, who was the son of Adela, the daughter of the Conqueror, and therefore nephew to Henry. It is probable that both of these men aspired to the throne, and that, while in the act of taking vows which they had no intention of performing, each was anxious to have his rank and standing determined. The legitimate birth of Stephen prevailed over the nearer relationship of Robert, and the earl of Boulogne first took the oaths to maintain the succession of Matilda.

In the same year (1126) Fulk, earl of Anjou, departed for the Holy Land, having first placed the government of his country in the hands of his son Geoffrey, surnamed Plante-Genest, or Plantagenet, from his custom of bearing on his helmet a sprig of yellow broom instead of a feather. The young count of Anjou is described as possessing elegant and courtly manners, a noble person, and a reputation for gallantry in the field. These qualities recommended him to the favour of king Henry, who personally invested him with the order of knighthood. The ceremony took place at Rouen with great pomp, and the king, according to the custom of chivalry, presented his son-in-arms with a horse and a splendid suit of armour.

The English king had frequently had cause to dread the opposition of the House of Anjou, and therefore he was induced, not less by motives of policy than by his regard for Geoffrey, to conclude an alliance with that powerful family. He determined that his daughter Matilda should wed the count of Anjou. The marriage was concluded without the knowledge of the barons, who afterwards declared their disapproval of it, and many of them made it a pretext for breaking the oath of allegiance which they had taken to the ex-empress.

The marriage was celebrated in Rouen at Whitsuntide, A.D. 1127, and the festival, which was marked with all the splendour which the wealth of Henry could command, was prolonged during three weeks. On the first day heralds went about the streets commanding in the king's name that all men whatsoever should take part in the festivities, and that any man neglecting to make merry on the joyful occasion should be considered guilty of an offence against the king.

Meanwhile, William of Normandy had obtained a position of power and influence which gave Henry great uneasiness. When Fulk of Anjou abandoned his connection with the son of Robert, the cause of the latter was still upheld by Louis, king of France. Charles the Good, earl of Flanders, the successor of Baldwin, was murdered by his own people while attending a service of the church in Bruges, and king Louis gave that county to William. The Flemings, who at first received their new earl without opposition, broke out into revolt after the departure of the French king, and sent to ask the support of Henry. William, however, was not without supporters, and his

personal gallantry, joined to high military talents, gave him the victory over the insurgents in various encounters. His career, however, was destined to be short; in an engagement under the walls of Alöst, in which he completely defeated his opponents, the son of Robert received a wound on the head which proved fatal within a few days afterwards. He died on the 27th July, 1128, at the age of twenty-six.

Henry was thus relieved from any dread of the pretensions of his nephew, and he passed over into Normandy, where he remained for several years in the society of his daughter. In 1133, Matilda gave birth to a son, who was named Henry, and who afterwards reigned in England with the title of Henry II. Subsequently two other sons, named Geoffrey and William, were the fruit of this marriage. On the birth of his grandson, the king again endeavoured to secure to his race the succession to the throne by causing the barons once more to swear fealty to Matilda and to her children. During Henry's stay in Normandy, various quarrels took place between the ex-empress and her husband, and the king had great difficulty in keeping the peace between them. It would appear that Matilda seized every opportunity of prejudicing her father against her husband, who was exasperated at the king's refusal to place him in immediate possession of Normandy.

The last years of Henry's life were embittered by these dissensions in his family, and his health rapidly declined. In the year 1135, he received news of an incursion of the Welsh, and while preparations were making for his return to England, he was seized with a sudden illness. Having passed a day in hunting at Lions-la-Forêt, in Normandy, he supped late in the evening upon a dish of lampreys, of which he was remarkably fond. An indigestion, which resulted in a fever, was the consequence of this indulgence, and three days afterwards he expired, A. D. 1135. His body was afterwards conveyed to Reading Abbey, which he had himself founded, and was there buried.

Stephen.

CHAPTER XL.

Accession of Stephen — A new Charter passed — Conspiracy among the Nobles — Battle of the Standard — Landing of Matilda — Imprisonment of Stephen.

THE exertions made by Henry Beauclerc to preserve to his daughter the succession to the throne proved altogether fruitless, and those solemn vows which he had exacted from the barons, and with which he had endeavoured to fence about the cause of Matilda, were of no avail. No sooner did the news of the king's death reach Stephen of Blois, than he instantly took measures for seizing upon the English crown. Allusion has already been made to this ambitious noble, who, on taking the oaths of fealty to Matilda, had caused himself to be recognised as the first prince of the blood.

Stephen, count of Blois, to whom William the Conqueror gave his daughter Adela in marriage, had several sons. Two of these, Henry and Stephen, had been invited to England by the late king, who had bestowed great favour and preferment upon them. Beauclerk, cruel towards his enemies, was a firm and generous friend to those who happened to obtain his good-will. Young Henry, who had been educated for the church, was made abbot of Glastonbury, and subsequently appointed to the see of Winchester. Stephen received the hand of Maud, daughter and heiress of Eustace, the count of Boulogne. The connection was in the highest degree advantageous to Stephen; immense estates in England as well as the earldom of Boulogne came to him in right of his wife, who moreover possessed a

The Battle of the Standard. (See page 166.)

hold upon the sympathies of the English in consequence of her Saxon descent. Mary, his wife's mother, was the sister to David, king of Scotland, and to Matilda the Good, first wife of Henry I. and mother of the empress.

At the time of the dispute with Robert of Gloucester on the subject of precedence, Stephen professed that his gratitude to the king impelled him to be the first to offer allegiance to Matilda, but his whole course of action at this period shows that his designs upon the English crown were fully matured. He exerted himself to attain popularity among the people, as well as among the barons. His daring and gallantry secured him the admiration of the Normans, while his affable and familiar manners, joined to a generosity without stint, obtained the affections of the people.

On the death of Henry, Stephen landed in England before the news could reach Matilda, and though the gates of Dover and Canterbury were shut against him, he passed on without hesitation to London, where a majority of the people saluted him king with acclamations. By the assistance of his brother, the bishop of Winchester, Stephen obtained possession of the royal treasure in that city, amounting to £100,000 in money, besides considerable stores of plate and jewels. The next step was to secure the goodwill and co-operation of the clergy, and in this respect his brother the bishop again tendered his aid. Roger, bishop of Sarum, chief functionary of the kingdom, was secured by bribes and promises, and these two ecclesiastics endeavoured to prevail upon William, archbishop of Canterbury, to administer the royal unction to the usurper. The primate, who was a conscientious man, refused consent, and a dishonourable expedient was then resorted to, to overcome his opposition. Hugh Bigod, steward of the royal household, presented himself before the archbishop and swore that king Henry on his death-bed had disinherited his daughter Matilda, who had offended him, and that he had appointed his nephew Stephen to succeed him as the inheritor of his kingdom.

These oaths, which were common in the middle ages, and which were so little real security when opposed to personal interests, were nevertheless regarded, nominally, as of considerable weight, and a pretext was therefore necessary for absolving the clergy and the barons from their vows of allegiance to Matilda. This was supplied by Roger of Sarum, who declared that those vows were null and void because the empress had been married out of the country without the consent of the lords, who had expressly stipulated that their opinion should be consulted in the disposal of the hand of their future queen.

Silver Penny of Stephen.

The several obstacles being thus overcome or set aside, the archbishop of Canterbury crowned Stephen (Dec. 22, A.D. 1135), at Westminster. Very few nobles attended the ceremony; but there was no show of opposition. The first act of the new king was to proceed to Reading to attend the burial of his uncle, and from thence he passed on to Oxford, where he held court, and summoned thither a council of the prelates and clergy of the kingdom, whom he required to swear allegiance to him. He permitted the clergy to annex to their oaths an important condition, to the effect that they swore to support his government only so long as he should maintain the rights and liberties of the church. The barons also obtained the right of fortifying castles upon their estates.

These concessions to the church secured the favour of the pope, Innocent II., who soon afterwards sent letters to Stephen, confirming his title to the throne. The words of the pontiff were as follows:—"We have heard that thou

Signature and Seal of Innocent II.

hast been chosen by the common voice and will of the people and of the lords, and that thou hast received a blessing from the ministers of the church. Considering that the choice of so large a number of men must have been directed by Divine grace; and that, moreover, thou art closely related to the deceased king, we are well pleased with the course taken in thy behalf; and we receive thee with paternal affection as a son of the blessed apostle Peter and of the holy Roman Church."

Still further to secure his position, Stephen passed a charter, closely resembling that issued under similar circumstances by his predecessor. He endeavoured to conciliate all the estates of the realm: to the clergy he promised that vacant benefices should immediately be filled up, and that their revenues should in no case be applied to the purposes of the crown; to the nobility he pledged his word that the royal forests which Henry Beauclerk had appropriated to himself, should be restored to their ancient boundaries; and to the people he engaged to remit the tax of Danegelt, and to restore the laws of king Edward. Stephen also made lavish gifts of money and lands to those about him, and during the first year of his reign the land rejoiced once more in plenty and prosperity. "To such means," says Holinshed, "are princes driven that attain to their estates more through favour and support of others than by any good right or title which they may pretend of themselves. Thus the government of this prince at the begin-

ning was nothing bitter or haughty to his subjects, but full of gentleness, lenity, courtesy, and mildness."

Matilda and her husband Geoffrey experienced no better fortune in Normandy than in England. The Norman nobility were influenced by the same reasons as formerly, in desiring a continuance of their union with the crown of England; while at the same time an hereditary animosity existed between them and the people of Anjou. When Geoffrey Plantagenet entered Normandy for the purpose of enforcing the rights of his wife Matilda, the Normans applied for assistance to Theobald of Blois, eldest brother of Stephen (A.D. 1136). As soon as Stephen obtained possession of the English throne, they transferred their allegiance to him, and put him in possession of the government of the duchy. The homage which, as feudal sovereign, was due to Louis VII., king of France, he accepted from Eustace, Stephen's eldest son, instead of from the English king himself, and Louis also betrothed his sister Constantia to the young prince. The count of Blois consented to resign his claim for a yearly pension of 2,000 marks, and Geoffrey of Anjou was compelled to conclude a truce of two years with Stephen, receiving, also, a pension of 5,000 marks.

Great Seal of Stephen.

Robert of Gloucester, the natural son of Henry, entertained the strongest feelings of hostility to Stephen. He appears, however, to have directed his efforts against the usurper, rather in support of the claims of his sister Matilda, than of any pretensions of his own. On the elevation of Stephen to the throne, Robert found it necessary to take the oath of allegiance, since a refusal to do so would have resulted in the loss of his estates in England, and of that power which he proposed to use in his sister's behalf. He therefore offered to do homage on condition that the king fulfilled all his promises, and never invaded any of the rights of Robert. Thus a pretext was afforded for revolt at any moment, and the earl of Gloucester, who was a man of considerable abilities and military reputation, occupied himself in promoting a spirit of disaffection among the nobles. The right which the English barons had obtained of erecting fortified castles was exercised to the utmost. Strong fortresses rapidly arose in all parts of the kingdom, and were garrisoned with licentious soldiery, native and foreign.

In proportion as the privileges of the nobles were extended, the condition of the people became once more one of oppression and misery. Petty wars broke out among the rival barons, who made incursions into each others' territories, and practised unbounded rapine upon the towns and villages. Some of the more powerful chiefs declared that the promises made to them by Stephen on his accession had not been fulfilled, and they seized various parts of the royal estates, which they asserted were their due. Among these was Hugh Bigod, whose act of perjury had secured the coronation of Stephen, and who now revolted openly against the king, and took possession of Norwich Castle.

The insurgents had not yet learned to act in concert, and Stephen soon recovered the estates which had been seized. The spirit of sedition, however, was not repressed; new disturbances were continually taking place, and the country remained in a state of anarchy.

In the year 1137, Robert, earl of Gloucester, having organised an extensive confederacy, quitted his estates, and having crossed the Channel, sent to the king a formal letter of defiance. Other great barons also, on the ground that the promises made to them had not been fulfilled, renounced their homage, and retired to their strongholds. Stephen displayed at this crisis the highest valour and activity, and a desultory warfare took place between the king and his disaffected nobles.

In March, A.D. 1138, David, king of Scotland, crossed the Tweed at the head of an army which he had collected from every part of his kingdom to defend the title of his niece, Matilda. The chroniclers describe the Scotch army as a wild and barbarous multitude, many of whom, gathered from the recesses of the highlands, were men fierce and untutored, half clad, and with only the rudest weapons of war. This undisciplined host passed through Northumberland into Yorkshire, devastating the country, and committed unheard-of barbarities upon the miserable inhabitants. It is related of them that they behaved after the manner of wild beasts, slaying all who came in their way, sparing neither old age in its helplessness, nor beauty in its spring, nor the infant in the womb.

The fury of these massacres exasperated the northern

nobility, who might otherwise have been disposed to join the king of Scotland. Thurstan, archbishop of York, an aged man, seemed to derive new youth from the crisis which demanded the exertion of his energies; he shook off the weight of years, and organising an army, he earnestly exhorted the barons and the soldiers to defend their countrymen from the ravages of the invaders. William, earl of Albemarle, Roger Mowbray, Robert de Ferrers, William Piercy, Walter L'Espec, and others of their compeers assembled their troops, and encamped at Elfer-tun, now called Northallerton, about half-way between York and Durham, and there awaited the arrival of the enemy. The advance of the Scots had been so rapid that Stephen, who was occupied with repressing the rebellion in the south, had no time to reach the scene of action.

The Scottish army, the first division of which was led by Prince Henry, son of David, crossed the Tees in several divisions, bearing as a standard a lance to which was fixed a bunch of the "blooming heather." They did not form, as was the case with more disciplined armies, distinct bodies of horse and foot, but each man brought to the field of battle such arms as he could obtain. With the exception of the French or Norman knights whom the king of Scotland brought with him, and who were armed *cap-à-pie*, with complete suits of mail, the great mass of his soldiers displayed a disorderly equipment. The men of Galloway and other parts of the west wore no defensive armour, and bore long and sharp pikes or javelins as their only weapon. The inhabitants of the lowlands, who formed the chief part of the infantry, were armed with spears and breastplates, while the Highlanders, who wore a bonnet adorned with plumes, and a plaid cloak fastened at the waist by a leathern belt, appeared in the fight with a small wooden shield on the left arm, while in the right hand they bore the claymore or broad sword. The chiefs wore the same armour as their soldiers, from whom they were only distinguished by the length of their plumes.

The Anglo-Norman barons, anxious to invoke on their behalf the ancient superstitions of the English, caused the banners of St. Cuthbert of Durham, St. John of Beverley, and St. Wilfrid of Ripon, to be brought from the churches in which they had remained since the time of the Conqueror, and erected them in the midst of the camp. The mast of a ship was set up in a car with four wheels; at the top of the mast was fixed a crucifix, attached to which was a silver box containing the sacramental wafer, or eucharist, and round it were hung the banners of the three English saints.

This standard, from which the battle has taken its name, was erected in the centre of the position. The knights of the English army were ranged beside it, having first sworn to remain united and to defend the sacred symbol to the death. The archbishop of York, who was prevented by illness from appearing in the field, sent a representative in the person of Ranulph, bishop of Durham, who, as the Scots were heard approaching, placed himself at the foot of the standard and read the prayer of absolution, the whole army kneeling before him. The attack was made by the men of Galloway, who rushed impetuously on the English infantry, and broke their ranks; the cavalry, however, remained firm round their standard, and repulsed the charges of the Scots with great slaughter. Meanwhile the bowmen of Yorkshire and Lincolnshire rallied from their confusion, and poured in flights of arrows upon the enemy, while the Norman knights, protected by their heavy armour, were receiving the attacks of the brave but undisciplined natives of the north. The Scots maintained the contest for two hours, but at length they were thrown into confusion by a charge of the Norman cavalry, and were compelled to retreat as far as the Tyne. At the battle of Northallerton, which was fought on the 22nd August, A.D. 1138, the loss of the Scots is stated to have been 12,000 men.

Three days after this defeat, the king of Scotland arrived at Carlisle, where he rallied his scattered forces, and subsequently laid siege to Wark Castle, which fell into his hands. Notwithstanding the result of the battle of the standard, the counties of Cumberland, Westmoreland, and Northumberland remained for many years free from Norman dominion, and attached to the kingdom of Scotland.

Roger, bishop of Sarum, the story of whose elevation to the favour of Henry I. has been already related, was

Effigy of Roger, Bishop of Sarum, in the Nave of Salisbury Cathedral.

at this time possessed of vast wealth and influence in the kingdom. He was a munificent patron of the arts,

and expended large sums in the erection of magnificent churches and other public works. Architects, artists, and men of letters were secure of his favour, and the wealth which was often obtained by not the most honest means, was at least bestowed in a manner beneficial to the age in which he lived. Roger had rendered good service to Stephen at the time of his accession to the throne, and the king had rewarded him with repeated and valuable gifts. It would appear, however, that these possessions were heaped upon the bishop less for his own use than with the view of being available for the royal purposes whenever the king might choose to seize upon them.

The nobles of the court had not witnessed without envy the increasing power and magnificence of the bishop of Sarum; and at the time when Stephen was menaced by an invasion from the Continent, they circulated a report that the bishop was in league with the conspirators. The king, who wanted money, was glad of a pretext for seizing the possessions of Roger, and ordered him to be arrested, together with his two nephews, Alexander, bishop of Lincoln, and Nigel, bishop of Ely. Nigel made his escape and took refuge in the castle of Devizes, but Roger and Alexander were taken and confined in separate dungeons. A quarrel which had previously taken place between some of the bishop's retainers and those of the earl of Brittany, formed the ground of the chief accusation, which was that the bishops had violated the peace of the king within the limits of his court. Stephen demanded the surrender of all their castles, as an atonement for the offence; and, after considerable opposition on the part of the two bishops, the demand was generally complied with. The bishop of Ely, however, still refused to surrender the castle of Devizes; and Stephen commanded that Roger and the bishop of Lincoln should receive no food until the castle was given up. By the king's order Roger appeared, wasted with fasting, before the gates of Devizes, and implored his nephew to surrender; and, after a delay of three days, the bishop of Ely at length yielded, to save the lives of his relatives.

These proceedings excited the utmost indignation among the prelates and clergy of the kingdom, and Henry, bishop of Winchester, who had been appointed legate of the pope, cited his brother, the king, to appear before an ecclesiastical synod at Winchester, to answer for his conduct. Alberic de Vere attended before the council as the substitute of Stephen, and the bishops having persisted in demanding reparation for the insult to the church, De Vere appealed in the king's name to the pope, and, drawing his sword, declared the assembly to be dissolved. A series of disasters, which soon after endangered the life and the crown of Stephen, were, in a great measure, to be referred to this determined opposition to the clergy. The synod at Winchester was held in September (A.D. 1139), and three months afterwards, Roger, bishop of Sarum, died at an advanced age, his end having probably been accelerated by the mortifications he had suffered.

On the 22nd of September, in the same year, the empress Matilda landed in England, accompanied by Robert, earl of Gloucester. The latter immediately proceeded with a small escort to the castle of Bristol, where he occupied himself in collecting his followers. Matilda was received into Arundel Castle by Adelais, widow of Henry I., who offered her protection. Stephen, having been apprised of this circumstance, surprised the castle, and took both the ladies prisoner. In pursuance of one of those chivalrous impulses of which the records of the middle ages afford so many examples, the king caused Matilda to be escorted in safety to her brother Robert, and restored to Adelais the possession of her castle.

A civil war now raged throughout the country. The Norman race in England were immediately split up into two factions, and each man looked with distrust upon his neighbour, uncertain whether to regard him as a friend or an enemy. Many of the barons of the west and north declared for Matilda, and recalled the oaths they had taken to Stephen; while many of the more rapacious lords, to whom the public good was a matter of no concern, kept aloof from both parties, and occupied themselves with seizing the property of the farmers and citizens. The chronicles of the time are filled with the atrocities which were committed at this period throughout the length and breadth of the land, which was desolated in every direction by violence and rapine.

Stephen having failed in an attempt to take the town of Bristol, which was strongly fortified, turned his forces to the east, where a formidable insurrection had broken out, headed by the bishop of Ely. On the very spot where Hereward, the Saxon, had erected his fort of wood, a camp was formed by the Norman adherents of Matilda, who entrenched themselves behind ramparts of stone and wood. Stephen conducted his attack in the same manner as had been done by William the Conqueror. He built bridges of boats, by which his soldiers passed over and put to flight the troops of Nigel.

The bishop fled to Gloucester, where Matilda had assembled the greater number of her adherents. During the absence of Stephen in the east, the flames of revolt were raging throughout the west, and churches as well as castles were fortified by the insurgents for the purposes of defence. The bishops are represented as having not scrupled to take part in these military operations; they were seen, as in the time of the Conqueror, mounted on chargers and clad in suits of mail, bearing a lance or a truncheon in their hands, directing the attacks of the soldiers and drawing lots for a share of the booty.*

A. D. 1141.—Stephen displayed the utmost activity in marching against his enemies. After having crossed and recrossed the country, he appeared before the castle of Lincoln, which was in the hands of the adherents of Matilda. The townspeople, however, favoured the king's cause, and, in opposition to the garrison, assisted him to lay siege to the fortress. Meanwhile the earl of Gloucester had collected an army of 10,000 men, and in the hope of effecting a surprise, marched rapidly to Lincoln, and appeared before the besieging troops. Stephen, however, had been apprised of his coming, and having drawn up his forces in battle array, placed himself at their head. The contest was unequal; most of the royal cavalry deserted to the enemy, and among the rest of the army, many of the troops wavered in their allegiance. In such a case defeat was inevitable. Stephen fought with desperate valour, but after having broken both his sword and battle-axe, he was made prisoner by the earl of Gloucester.

The empress Matilda, forgetting the generosity she had

* Gesta Steph.

experienced at the hands of the king, ordered him to be loaded with chains and imprisoned in the keep of Bristol Castle. This defeat was disastrous to the royal cause. Many of the Norman nobles and of the clergy, among whom was Henry of Winchester, the king's own brother, gave in their adhesion to the cause of Matilda. The support of the bishop is said to have been gained by a promise

Stephen taken Prisoner. (See page 167)

on the part of the empress that he should be placed in the position of her chief minister, and should have the disposal of all the vacant benefices of the church.

On the day after this bargain was concluded, the granddaughter of the Conqueror made her triumphal entry into Winchester. She was received at the gates by bishop Henry at the head of the clergy, who conducted her to the cathedral, and the brother of Stephen pronounced a blessing upon all who should follow her cause, and a curse on those who should oppose it.

Having taken possession of the royal treasure which remained at Winchester, Matilda, after some delay, proceeded to London, where she arrived at midsummer. She was of Saxon descent, and the unhappy citizens, ground down by taxation, hoped to obtain from her some release of the burdens with which they were oppressed. But Matilda's good fortune soon rendered her disdainful and arrogant, and it is said by an old historian that when those men to whom she owed her elevation bowed down before her, she did not rise from her throne, and their requests were frequently met by a refusal. It is, therefore, scarcely matter for surprise, that when the citizens of London entreated her to take pity on them, she answered with a

frown, and one of her first acts was to impose a heavy tax, or taillage, in addition to the burdens with which they were already afflicted. The empress seems to have possessed a malignant nature, which found vent in injuries inflicted equally on friends and enemies. Henry of Winchester, who may have felt some compunction at the part he had acted towards his brother, desired that his nephew Eustace, the son of Stephen, might be put in possession of his hereditary rights, one of which was the earldom of Boulogne; Matilda replied to the request with an insulting denial. Many other acts of arrogance, as impolitic in a queen as they were disgraceful in a woman, were exhibited towards her best friends; and when the wife of Stephen, who was Matilda's own cousin, appeared in her presence and entreated that her husband might be restored to liberty, the empress drove the sorrowing wife away in tears.

The Empress Matilda and the Queen of Stephen.

CHAPTER XLI.

Reign of Stephen continued—Flight of Matilda from London—Release of Stephen—Siege of Oxford—Midnight Flight of Matilda—Death of the Earl of Gloucester—Landing of Prince Henry—Truce between Henry and Stephen—Death of Stephen.

MATILDA was making ready for her coronation in perfect security, when a rising of the people, as sudden as it was unanimous, resulted in driving her from London in the utmost haste, and without even so much as a change of raiment. An alarm sounded from all the steeples of the City, and immediately every street was filled with an excited multitude of the people. From the doors of every house men came forth, armed with such weapons as they could procure. The empress and her Angevins,*—startled by the suddenness of the attack, and not daring to risk a conflict where the numbers were so greatly against them, and which would have to be carried on in narrow streets, where every advantage would be on the side of their enemies,—made no attempt at resistance, but hastily seized horses and galloped off at full speed. Matilda had scarcely quitted the town, when the enraged populace forced their way into her apartments, and seized or destroyed whatever they found there.

As the ex-empress sped on her way, the barons and knights who accompanied her one by one detached themselves from the escort, and, consulting only their own safety, fled across the country, or along cross-roads, towards their strongholds. She arrived at Oxford, with the earl of Gloucester and a few followers, whom motives of policy, or a regard for their knightly honour, still held attached to her fortunes. The citizens of London attempted no pursuit of the fugitives. Their revolt appears to have been a sudden outbreak of popular indignation, rather than the result of any preconcerted arrangement, and was not followed by any further measures of a similar kind. The Norman adherents of king Stephen soon afterwards reentered London, and, having obtained the consent of the citizens, by the promise of an alliance with them, garrisoned the city with troops. The only privileges obtained by the citizens in consequence of the insurrection were the permission of enlistment to the number of one thousand men, and of fighting in the cause of the king, wearing a helmet and hauberk. Queen Maud, the wife of Stephen, proceeded to London, and there held court. She was a woman of gentle and amiable character; but her lot was cast in evil times, and she displayed the energy and courage of a man in her efforts to obtain her husband's liberation.

* People of Anjou.

The bishop of Winchester, whom Matilda, in her short day of power, had so grievously offended, no sooner perceived the tide of fortune turning against the empress, than he deserted her cause, and once more declared himself in favour of his brother. He hoisted the banner of Stephen on the walls of Winchester castle, and on his palace, which had been fortified with all the engineering skill of the age. Other castles within his diocese, including those of Waltham and Farnham, were strongly garrisoned. An interview took place at Guilford between the bishop and his sister-in-law, queen Maud, whose entreaties probably removed any hesitation he might feel as to his course of action.

Matilda having become aware of these transactions, sent the bishop a haughty message to appear immediately in her presence. The prelate sent back the messengers with the answer that he was "making himself ready for her,"—an expression which had a double meaning. Matilda marched with her followers to Winchester; but the bishop, leaving his palace defended by a strong garrison, quitted the town as she entered it, and proceeded to place himself at the head of his vassals, and of the knights who had agreed to fight under his standard. The castle of Winchester was given up to Matilda, and she summoned around her those barons who still adhered to her cause. Among these were Robert of Gloucester, the earl of Chester, the earl of Hereford, and David, king of Scotland, uncle to the empress.

The troops under these leaders laid siege to the episcopal palace, which stood in the heart of the city. The bishop's garrison, having set fire to the adjoining houses, which might have served as places of defence to the assailants, retired into their fortress and waited for succour. Meanwhile the bishop of Winchester had received an accession of strength from the troops of queen Maud, among whom were the citizens of London, to the number, as already mentioned, of one thousand. Marching rapidly to Winchester, the bishop surprised the troops of the empress, who were compelled to entrench themselves in the churches, while Matilda herself, with her chief nobles, took refuge in the castle. Thus the besiegers were in turn besieged; the sanctuary was not respected by the warlike bishop of Winchester, and the churches were burnt down in order to force the occupants from their place of refuge. The unhappy inhabitants suffered extreme misery while this murderous warfare was going on in their streets; they were plundered by both of the opposing factions, their goods seized without redress, and their homes burnt down or ransacked.

The castle, which was completely surrounded by the troops of the bishop, sustained a siege of six weeks, by which time the provisions of the garrison were exhausted. A daring expedient was determined upon by the empress as the alternative of an unconditional surrender. The 14th of September (A.D. 1141) was the feast of the Holy Rood or Cross, on which, as on other festivals of the church, it was the custom for antagonists in the field to desist from hostilities. At daybreak on that day, when the besieging troops were asleep or engaged in preparing for their devotions, Matilda stole out from the castle accompanied by her brother the earl of Gloucester, and a small but chosen escort. Mounted on fleet horses they made their way through the troops of the bishop, and fled at full speed along the road to Devizes. A hot pursuit was immediately set on foot, and the fugitives were overtaken in the neighbourhood of Stourbridge. Finding escape impossible, the earl of Gloucester and the knights who were with him turned upon their pursuers and kept them at bay, while the empress urged on her horse and arrived in safety at Devizes. After a gallant resistance the earl with several of his companions were taken prisoners.

Matilda pursued her way without delay from Devizes to Gloucester. It is related that exhausted by her rapid flight, or desirous of avoiding danger on the road, she feigned death, and caused herself to be conveyed in a hearse or litter. This story, however, is improbable in itself and rests on indifferent foundation. The knights who escaped from the engagement at Stourbridge, abandoned their arms and horses and passed through the towns on foot, so that they might not be recognised. The worst enemies they had to fear were not the adherents of Stephen who pursued them, but the Saxon peasantry, whose hatred against the Normans, of whatever faction, had been kept alive by a long series of cruelties and acts of oppression. The fugitives, notwithstanding their disguise, were betrayed by their foreign accent, and they were attacked wherever they went by the English, who bound them with cords and flogged them along the roads with knotted whips. The king of Scotland escaped in safety to his kingdom, and the earl of Hereford succeeded in reaching Gloucester castle, where, however, he arrived in miserable plight, without arms and almost without clothes. The earl of Gloucester was brought before the queen of Stephen, who ordered him to be confined in Rochester castle. We are told by the best authorities that Maud did not retaliate upon the earl for the harsh treatment he had inflicted upon her husband, but that she permitted him every indulgence consistent with his safe custody.

About a month after the capture of the earl of Gloucester, a treaty was concluded between the belligerents, by the terms of which the king was exchanged for the earl, and thus the leaders of both armies regained their liberty. Stephen resumed his title and the exercise of the royal authority over the eastern and midland counties, which were the parts of the country in the possession of his adherents. Normandy no longer acknowledged the rule of the English king; during his imprisonment the duchy had submitted to Geoffrey of Anjou, who soon afterwards resigned it in favour of his eldest son Henry.

The resumption of authority by Stephen rendered it necessary for the clergy to renounce, in form at least, their vows of allegiance to Matilda. Finding themselves in a position of embarrassment and difficulty, an ecclesiastical council was convened at Westminster, for the purpose of debating on the subject. The bishop of Winchester, as the legate of the pope, exhibited a letter from Innocent, desiring him to use every means in his power to restore his brother to liberty. The bishop then proceeded to justify the measures he had adopted in support of Matilda. He said that he had espoused her cause, not because he had desired to do so, but because circumstances impelled him to that course of action. Matilda had not fulfilled her promises, but had used him with contumely, and even made attempts against his life. He therefore considered that he was absolved from the oaths he had taken to her, and at liberty to restore his allegiance to the king. Stephen, who was present at the assembly, then spoke to the same effect: he alluded to the disgrace the nobles endured in being governed by a woman, and declared that he had never withheld

justice from those of his subjects who asked for it. The majority of the council acknowledged the authority of the pope's letter, and the legate proceeded to excommunicate all the adherents of that cause to which he had himself so lately been attached. Stephen was thus restored to power; but a lingering illness prevented him for some time from pursuing aggressive measures towards his enemies.

During this time the country wore an aspect of woe and desolation. All kinds of depredations were committed by the soldiers of Brabant, the Flemings, and other foreigners with whom the land was overrun; while the Anglo-Norman nobles raised funds for the expenses of the civil war by selling their English estates, together with the miserable inhabitants. So great was the terror excited among the people by this state of things, that we are told that a considerable body of them would take to flight at the sight of three or four horsemen. Stories dark and dread were currently reported of cruelties practised by the Normans upon those who fell into their power. Those prisoners who were suspected to possess property of any kind were subjected to unheard-of tortures to compel them to give up their hoards. Some were suspended by the feet, while fumes of smoke were made to ascend about their heads; others were tied at some distance from the ground by the thumbs, while their feet were scorched by fire; or were thrown into pits filled with reptiles of different kinds; sometimes they suffered the dislocation of their limbs in what was called the *chambre-à-crucir;** this was a chest lined with sharp-pointed stones, in which the victim was fastened up.† Many of the castles contained a room or dungeon specially set apart for these purposes, and filled with instruments of torture, and with iron chains so heavy that it required two or three men to lift them. "You might have journeyed," says the authority already quoted, "a whole day without seeing a living person in the towns, or in the country one field in a state of tillage. The poor perished with hunger, and many who once possessed property now begged food from door to door. Every man who had the power quitted England. Never were greater sorrows poured upon this land."

Alarmed at the increasing power of Stephen, Matilda sent the earl of Gloucester to her husband, Geoffrey of Anjou, entreating him to bring his forces to her aid. The earl replied that his presence was necessary in his own dominions, but expressed his willingness to send his son, prince Henry, in his stead. Some months' delay ensued, and then Henry, with the earl his uncle, quitted Normandy with an inconsiderable force, and effected a landing in England.

Revolt of the Citizens of London against Matilda. (See page 169.)

Meanwhile, Stephen, having recovered from his illness, collected an army and laid siege to the city of Oxford, where Matilda had assembled her followers. The town fell into his hands almost immediately, and was set on fire by the royal troops. The empress had retreated into the castle, which was a place of great strength, but, as had been the case at Winchester, it proved to be insufficiently victualled. The fortress was completely surrounded and cut off from all supplies from without, and after a siege of three months the empress found herself compelled to make her escape in the same manner as before.

* Torture-chamber

† Chron. Sax.

One night in December, when the ground was covered with snow, Matilda quitted the castle at midnight, attended by three knights, who, as well as herself, were clothed in white. More fortunate than on the previous occasion, the party passed through the lines of their enemies entirely unobserved, and crossed the Thames, which was frozen over. The adventurous daughter of Beauclerk then pursued her way, sometimes on foot, sometimes on horseback, to Wallingford, where she joined the army of her son and the earl of Gloucester.

After having taken Oxford castle, Stephen encountered the forces of the earl of Gloucester at Wilton, and was defeated, the king himself having a narrow escape of a second imprisonment. A desultory warfare ensued, which lasted during three years, without any important advantage to either side. Prince Henry remained during this time at Bristol castle, in the company of his uncle, the earl of Gloucester, and in 1147 returned to Normandy. Soon after his departure, Robert of Gloucester died of an illness

Statue of Stephen in the Choir of York Cathedral.

resulting from alternate excesses and privations. Deprived of the aid of her half-brother, who had governed her affairs with undoubted ability, Matilda found her position become every day less secure. One by one her most faithful partisans fell away, stricken down by disease, or weary of the contest; and among those who died was the earl of Hereford, one of the ablest and most powerful defenders of her cause. At length the ex-empress determined to pass over into Normandy, there to concert with her husband and her son fresh measures for renewing the struggle. Emboldened by her absence, Stephen made vigorous attempts to re-establish his power upon a firm basis, and for this purpose he endeavoured by stratagem, as well as by force, to obtain possession of various strongholds which had been seized and fortified by the barons. The efforts thus made to reduce these haughty chiefs to submission met with little success, and the king's own adherents were ill-disposed to support a policy which they foresaw might one day be extended to themselves.

On the death of Innocent II., the office of legate of the Holy See was transferred from the bishop of Winchester to Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury. The archbishop having proceeded to the council of Rheims in opposition to the royal command, was banished from the court. This impolitic act of Stephen was attended by consequences which show the extraordinary power possessed by the clergy over the rude and licentious men of that age. Hugh Bigod, the earl of Norfolk, one of the adherents of Matilda, received the exiled prelate under his protection; and Theobald issued a sentence of excommunication against all the followers of the king, and the whole of the country which acknowledged his rule was declared without the pale of the church. The order was obeyed by the clergy to the letter: the churches were closed, the services of religion suspended, and men died unhouselled in consequence of the refusal of the priests to perform their functions.

The ruthless Normans, familiar from their childhood with bloodshed, trembled before what they regarded as the wrath of heaven; and the enslaved English regarded as their worst misery the decree which deprived them of ghostly consolation. While the land was suffering from disorders —which in this history have been briefly glanced at, but which are fully described in the pages of the chroniclers— the stately edifices of religion, scattered throughout the country, attracted to themselves, as to a centre, not only all the superstition, but the piety, the learning, and the virtue of the age. Built on the bank of some gentle stream, defended from storms by surrounding hills or dense woods, rose the solemn walls of the abbey church, gladdening the eyes of the traveller with the certainty of rest and protection: the one peaceful spot which, amidst the surrounding storm and violence, offered shelter to the weary, and pointed the hope of the sorrowing to heaven.

Those charitable institutions, which in later and happier times had a separate existence, were in the twelfth century included within the walls of the religious houses. Each monastery of note contained its hospital; and the study of medicine was cultivated by the monks as well as by the women of that age. When the terrible disease of leprosy was carried into this country from Palestine —an event which appears to date from the time of the first Crusade —various hospitals, which partook of the hallowed character of monastic establishments, were built for the reception of the sufferers. The leper, cut off by law from all intercourse with general society, as is the case still in countries where this scourge prevails, was received into these houses, where, in the company of his brethren in calamity, and subjected to no restraints but those of the conventual rule, he might lead his monotonous life engaged in the services of religion, and in the enjoyment at least of comfort and tranquillity.

The hospitals attached to the monasteries also received within their walls those who were wounded in the frequent battles or forays of that turbulent period; and it would appear that those who needed the surgical assistance of the monks, in these and similar cases, were tended with a degree of care and kindly feeling in agreeable contrast to the common temper of the age, and with all the skill

of which the monks were possessed. These hospitals were frequently of noble, or even of royal foundation, and were often possessed of great wealth. One of the first of these religious lazar-houses of which we have any record, was the hospital of St. Giles, which received during this and the following centuries numerous rich and important endowments. Henry II. granted to it a charter, and gave a sum of £3 yearly to buy its inmates a distinctive habit. It was at the gate of this establishment that, towards the close of the fourteenth century, when the gallows was removed from the Elms to "the north land of the wall belonging to the hospital," the singular custom was observed of presenting to criminals, on their way to execution, a large bowl of ale, called the "St. Giles's bowl."

While it is probable that the interdict of the archbishop of Canterbury did not interfere materially with the offices of charity and mercy, which, in addition to those of religion, were performed by the monks, it is, nevertheless, easy to understand why such a proclamation might be attended with serious inconvenience even to that part of the laity who cared nothing for the services of religion. The discontent throughout the country became so loud, that Stephen was compelled to make overtures to the archbishop for a reconciliation. After some delay, the primate accepted the terms, and the ban of the church was removed from the royal dominions. The king, who, in the interval, had learnt the expediency of securing the favour and adhesion of the clergy, made large donations to the churches and monasteries, and promised to extend these gifts, and add to them certain important privileges as soon as the kingdom should be placed in a condition of peace and security.

Two years after the reconciliation with the archbishops, Stephen convened at London a general assembly of the higher ecclesiastics, and demanded that his eldest son, Eustace, should, with their authority, be acknowledged as successor to the throne. The bishops, headed by the archbishop of Canterbury, refused positively to comply with this demand. As the legate of Rome, the archbishop had communicated with the pope on the subject, and had received, for answer, that Stephen was an usurper, and had not the right possessed by legitimate sovereigns of transmitting the crown to a successor. Exasperated by a refusal which followed his efforts at conciliation, Stephen ordered the bishops to be placed under arrest, and their benefices to be seized. This, however, was only a temporary outburst of anger, and appears to have been, to some extent, justified by the open defiance given by the prelates to the sovereign to whom they had sworn allegiance.

The king soon found himself menaced by further dangers from Normandy. In the year 1149, prince Henry, the son of Matilda, had landed in Scotland, attended by a retinue of knights and nobles, for the purpose of receiving the order of knighthood from his relative, the king of Scotland. David, at that time, held his court at Carlisle; and Henry, who had just attained his sixteenth year, received his spurs at that place, in the presence of a vast assemblage of barons from various parts of England, as well as from Scotland and Normandy. The gallant bearing and character of the young prince is said to have produced the most favourable effect upon those who witnessed the ceremony, and was afterwards contrasted with that of the son of Stephen, to the disadvantage of the latter. Henry, having returned to Normandy in the year 1150, was placed in possession of the government of that duchy, and, on the death of his father, Geoffrey Plantagenet, which took place immediately afterwards, the prince received the earldom of Anjou. The latter province was conferred upon him with the stipulation that he should resign it in favour of his younger brother on the day when he should become king. He swore solemnly to this effect over the dead body of his father, but the oath, as was the case with many other kingly oaths of those days, was violated without compunction when the time came for its fulfilment.

In the year 1152, Henry married Eleanor, Alienor, or Aanor, the divorced wife of Louis VII. of France, and daughter of William, earl of Poitou and duke of Aquitaine. According to the laws of those provinces, Eleanor succeeded her father in the exercise of sovereignty, and her husband, though a foreigner, shared the same rights. Eleanor was married in 1137 to Louis, king of France, who exercised control over her domains so long as he remained united to her, and he garrisoned the towns of Aquitaine with soldiers and officers of his own. The queen had given birth to two daughters, and the union had lasted several years without interruption, when Louis determined to make a pilgrimage to Palestine, and his wife, whose uncle Raymond was duke of Antioch, accompanied him on the journey. In the account already given of the first crusade, allusion has been made to the low state of morality which prevailed in the camps, and it would appear that even the queen of France was not exempt from the evil influences by which she was surrounded. Eleanor, who was possessed of remarkable beauty, displayed great freedom of manners, and she was accused, whether justly or otherwise, of an improper connection with a young Saracen knight named Saladin. On the return of the court from the Holy Land, in the year 1152, Louis called a council of the clergy at Baugency-sur-Loire, and demanded a divorce from his wife. The cause of the king was pleaded by the bishop of Langres, who offered evidence of the offences committed by the queen. The archbishop of Bordeaux, however, while assenting to the king's request, proposed that the separation should take place in a manner less fatal to the reputation of Eleanor,—namely, on the ground of consanguinity between the parties. It was discovered by the prelates, rather late, that the queen was the cousin of her husband within the prohibited degrees. This, however, was the only ground on which the laws of the church permitted a divorce, which, under any circumstances, was only granted to princes.

Eleanor, who regarded her husband as "more a monk than a king," assented readily to a separation; and on the marriage being annulled, she set out for her own domains, and remained for a while at the town of Blois. The repudiated wife seems to have had no want of suitors, and rather found a difficulty in protecting herself from their importunities. Theobald, earl of Blois, the brother of king Stephen, offered her his hand, and having met with a refusal, he detained the duchess a prisoner in his castle, with the determination of marrying her by force. Suspecting his design, Eleanor escaped from the castle by night, and descending the Loire in a boat, reached the city of Tours, which at that time belonged to the duchy of Anjou.

Geoffrey of Anjou, the second son of Matilda, hearing

of the arrival of the duchess, and tempted, probably, by her vast possessions, determined also to make her his wife; and placed himself in ambush at the Port de Piles, on the Loire, to intercept her as she passed, and carry her off.

Flight of Matilda from Oxford. (See page 172.)

Eleanor, however, "warned by her good angel," turned aside, and took the road to Poictiers. Here, Henry, with more courtesy than his brother or the earl of Blois, presented himself to her, and the offer of his hand being accepted, married her within a few weeks after her divorce. The conduct of the young prince in this transaction does not appear in a very delicate or chivalrous light; and it is evident that motives of policy alone could have induced him to marry a women, who, however beautiful, was considerably older than himself, and whose reputation was certainly not without stain.

By this alliance Henry received the titles of duke of

Aquitaine and earl of Poitou, in addition to those which he had previously possessed. His domains now considerably exceeded in extent those of the French king; and Louis, alarmed at the increase of the Norman power, forbade Henry, who, as duke of Normandy, was his vassal, to contract the marriage with Eleanor. Henry, however, paid no regard to the prohibition, and the French king was compelled to accept the new vows of homage which the prince now offered him for the territories of Aquitaine and Poitou. These oaths, which were in fact little else than matters of form, had been for many years the only bond which remained between the ancient Frankish kings and the lords of those provinces which extended between the Loire and the two seas. The country, called Gaul by the Romans, had, in the seventh century, already become known among neighbouring nations under the general name of France: but in the country itself, this appellation was not yet recognised.

The great and rapid increase of power thus attained by Henry Plantagenet, necessarily excited the hopes of his mother, and of her adherents in England, who were gratified by the prospect of renewing the contest with Stephen in favour of a young prince whose gallantry and abilities offered the best prospect of success. The English king foresaw the approaching danger, and had no difficulty in perceiving that Henry would command many more supporters in England than would have ranged themselves under the standard of the haughty Matilda. Stephen, therefore, concluded an alliance with Louis of France, as well as with the earl of Blois, and with Geoffrey of Anjou, Henry's younger brother. The two latter willingly took up arms against one who occupied to both of them the position of a successful rival, and they joined the army which the French king marched into Normandy. Henry, however, made a vigorous defence, and having repulsed the attacks of the French with success, he obtained a truce. Meanwhile the earl of Chester had arrived in the duchy from England, bearing with him a message from a number of chiefs of the Plantagenet party, who invited Henry to take possession of the throne in his own right. The earl declared this to be the unanimous will of the people; and the prince responded to the call, and, without waiting to organise a large force, he immediately set sail for England.

The army with which he landed numbered about 140 knights, and 3,000 infantry; it was composed, however, of picked men, and was well disciplined. Many of the barons of the kingdom immediately joined his standard, bringing with them considerable reinforcements; and Henry marched his forces to Wallingford, for the purpose of giving battle to the king. Meanwhile Stephen had made great exertions to oppose his adversary, and endeavoured, by bribes and other means, to detach the barons from his cause. Some of the latter, who had declared for Henry, no sooner heard with what a small force he had ventured into England, than they returned to the side of the king. The war between the opposing factions was carried on in the same manner as before—castles were besieged and taken, and towns carried by assault, plundered, and burnt. The English, driven from their homes, or flying from them in terror, built huts under the walls of the churches, in the hope that the sacredness of the place would protect them. No such considerations, however, restrained the belligerents, who expelled the people from their sanctuary, and turned the churches into fortresses. On the steeples,

Meeting of Stephen and Prince Henry at Wallingford.

whence the sweet sounds of bells were wont to give the call to prayer, were now placed the frowning engines of war.*

The army of Stephen, which had marched from London occupied the left bank of the Thames at Wallingford, opposite to the troops of Henry. The opposing forces remained in this position during two whole days without coming to an engagement, and, during the pause which thus took place, negotiations were entered into between the two princes. It would appear that even the Norman nobles had become tired of the horrors of a civil war which had lasted fifteen years, and the earl of Arundel did not hesitate to say that it was unreasonable that the calamities of the nation should be continued further through the ambition of two princes. Other lords, on both sides, expressed the same sentiments, and entreated the king and the prince to meet together for the purpose of arranging terms of peace.

An interview took place between the two chiefs, who conversed with each other across a narrow part of the river Thames, and ultimately agreed to desist from hostilities, pending the conclusion of a treaty which was to be arranged at a general council of the kingdom. Prince Eustace, the only son of Stephen, was seized with indignation at the prospect of an arrangement which would, probably, exclude him from the throne, and, instantly quitting his father's presence, he proceeded into Cambridgeshire, recklessly determining to maintain his right by arms. Having gathered together a band of lawless followers, he seized possession of the abbey of St. Edmund, ejected the monks, and placed there his head-quarters. He occupied himself in plundering the neighbourhood, and the property so obtained was expended in rioting and other excesses. This state of things, however, was of short duration. One day, when the prince was seated at a banquet, he was seized with a sudden and violent illness, or frenzy, of which he died. The memory of St. Edmund, king and martyr, was held in the highest veneration by the English people, and the death of the prince was attributed by them to the vengeance of Heaven, provoked by the outrage he had committed upon the sanctuary of the saint.

Stephen now had less difficulty in agreeing to terms which would be acceptable to Henry. The king had indeed one son remaining, but he was too young to be aware of how much his interests were concerned in the arrangements about to be made. The council of the kingdom was held at Winchester, November 7th, 1153, and it was finally determined that Stephen should hold possession of the throne during his life, and that after his death the succession should devolve upon Henry and his heirs. This treaty, which was sworn to by the clergy, nobles, and knights of both parties, is described by different writers in different points of view. Some historians say that Stephen adopted Henry as his son, and *gave* the kingdom to him after his own death; while others assert that the king acknowledged the hereditary right of Henry, who thereupon gave him permission to reign during his life. It is worthy of remark, that we find the various boroughs regarded in connection with this treaty as of some importance, and that they were called upon to take the oaths of allegiance in the same manner as the barons. The officers of the most important of the royal castles gave hostages to Henry for the surrender of those strongholds to him when the king's death should take place.

The treaty having been concluded, Henry and Stephen made a progress together through the country, visiting the cities of London, Winchester, and Oxford. Everywhere they were received with unfeigned joy by the people, who, whatever might have been their sentiments with regard to either of the two princes, welcomed the chance which placed them side by side with sheathed swords.

Henry proceeded to the continent at the time of Lent, 1154, and in the month of October in the same year Stephen died at Dover, in the fiftieth year of his age and the nineteenth of his reign. He was buried at the monastery of Faversham, in Kent, and his tomb was afterwards destroyed when the monasteries were suppressed by the command of Henry VIII.

CHAPTER XLII.

Accession of Henry II., surnamed Plantagenet, A.D. 1154—Reasons of his Popularity—Resumption and Destruction of Castles—Expedition to Toulouse.

At the time of the death of Stephen, Henry Plantagenet was engaged in a desultory warfare against some of his rebellious vassals in Normandy. Secure in the strength of his party

Statue of Henry II., in the choir of York Cathedral.

in England, and in the certainty that his succession would not be disputed, he remained to bring the affairs in which he was engaged to a successful termination, and then proceeded to take possession of the vacant throne. The news of his arrival, which took place six weeks after the death of Stephen, was received with general satisfaction by the people, who were induced to hope, from the lineage as well as the character of the new king, that his rule would be just and impartial.

The Saxon race, faithful to their old traditions, dwelt with satisfaction upon the Saxon blood which had been

transmitted to Henry by his mother, Matilda. They forgot the haughty character of the empress-queen, and remembered only that she, and through her, their new sovereign, was descended from Alfred the Great. Writers of the time, who either believed sincerely what they wrote or were paid to influence the people in favour of their sovereign, affirmed that England now once more possessed a king of English race; that already there were many bishops and abbots of the same race, while of chiefs and nobles not a few had sprung from the intermixture of Norman and Saxon blood. They, therefore, held that the hatred hitherto existing between the two races, would henceforth rapidly disappear. The opinions thus hopefully expressed were not justified by the actual circumstances, nor were they realised for a considerable time afterwards. It was no doubt true that since the time of the conquest many Saxon women had been forcibly espoused by the Normans, but it would appear that the children of such marriages were far from regarding themselves as the brethren of the Saxon people whom they saw oppressed and degraded by the conquerors. They regarded their English blood as a stain which they were anxious to conceal by more than common harshness towards the nation from which their mothers had sprung.

Great Seal of Henry II.

In the early part of the reign of William the Conqueror, he had endeavoured to remove discord from the two nations under his rule by promoting matrimonial alliances between them, and to this end he had offered women of his own country to some of the more powerful Saxon lords who remained free. Marriages of this kind, however, were few, and when the increased power of the Normans had reduced the conquered people to a condition of servitude, no Englishman was considered sufficiently noble to be worthy of the hand of a Norman woman. The few men of Saxon race who, by dint of flattery and subservience, succeeded in gaining the favour of the Norman princes, and in retaining possession of wealth and power, bore no proportion to the mass of their countrymen, who were reduced to slavery. Nor can it be supposed that the character of such men would prompt them to exertions in favour of their less fortunate kinsmen.

Henry II., however, was fully aware of the support which the Norman dynasty would receive from the intermixture of the two races. He encouraged the popular feeling with regard to his Saxon birth, and evinced no displeasure when the English monks, in describing his genealogy, avoided all allusion to his descent on the father's side. "Thou art a son," they said, "of the most glorious empress Matilda, whose mother was Matilda, daughter of Margaret, queen of Scotland, whose father was Edward, son of king Edmund Ironside, who was great grandson of the noble king Alfred." Predictions also were discovered, or invented, tending to raise still further the hopes of the people in the prosperity which would attend the new reign—hopes not destined to be realised. One of these prophecies, couched in the allegorical form in which such dark sayings were usually put forth, was attributed to king Edward the Confessor on his death-bed. That such stories produced their effect upon the minds of men may serve to show the superstitious tendencies of the age. It is related that one of the old chroniclers, in his attempt to reconcile the two races, reproduced a statement copied from a writer still more ancient, to the effect that William the Conqueror was himself descended from Edmund Ironside. "Edmund," said the chronicle, "had, in addition to his two sons, an only daughter, who was banished the country for her licentious conduct, and whose beauty having attracted the attention of duke Robert of Normandy, she became his mistress, and gave birth to William, surnamed the Bastard."

Silver Penny, Henry II.

It was evident that the people had every desire to separate Henry from that hatred which they still cherished towards the Norman race; and they designated him as the corner-stone which was to unite the two walls of the state. On the other hand, the Norman nobles saw their king in his true character as the descendant of the Conqueror, and

they knew that their own position was secure in the possession of wealth, power, and civil privileges.

When Henry landed in England, attended by a splendid escort, the people flocked to meet him, and tendered their congratulations. The cavalcade entered the royal city of Winchester amidst the acclamations of the crowd, the queen Eleanor riding at the king's side. Having received the homage of the barons, the royal party proceeded to London, and on the 19th of December the coronation took place at Westminster.

The first act of the new king was to assemble a council, at which a royal decree was issued, promising to the people those rights which they had enjoyed under the reign of Henry I., and the laws which that king had restored. Stephen was declared to have been an usurper, and all the institutions originated by him were at once abolished. Measures were taken to suppress the practice of false coining, which had become very common during the late reign; and the general currency having deteriorated, a new coinage was issued, of standard weight and purity.

The Brabançons and other foreign mercenaries who had become established in England during the civil war, had in many cases obtained possession of the castles and domains of the Norman adherents of Matilda, and had been confirmed in their titles by Stephen. The Norman nobles found themselves driven out, and their mansions fortified against them in the same manner that they themselves had seized the dwellings of the Saxons. When, therefore, the Brabançons and Flemings were expelled by Henry, the whole of the Anglo-Normans experienced great exultation. "We saw them," says a contemporary writer, "re-cross the sea, called back from the camp to the field, and from the sword to the plough; and those who had been lords were compelled to return to their old condition of serfs."*

Henry II.

The Normans, who thus made a jest of the humble origin of the Flemings, forgot that their own fathers had quitted occupations of a similar kind to follow the fortunes of the Conqueror not a hundred years before. The men of the dominant race, who had acquired titles and estates in England, had driven from their minds all recollection of their former condition, and of the means by which their present eminence was obtained, although few of them could bear a favourable comparison in these respects with the later usurpers whom they reviled. The Saxons, however,

* Rud. de Diceto.

did not forget the humble origin of their oppressors, and they were accustomed to say of an arrogant earl or bishop of Norman origin, "He torments and goads us in the same manner that his grandfather used to beat the oxen at the plough."*

The grants of land which had been made during the reign of Stephen, had impoverished the state to such an extent that the revenues were inadequate to the support of the crown. Various gifts also had been made during the brief reign of Matilda, who found it necessary to reward her followers in the same manner as had been done by Stephen. Soon after the truce between Henry and the late king, a treaty had been signed at Winchester, according to which Stephen agreed to resume possession of the royal domains, which had been given to the nobles or taken by them forcibly; the only exceptions being grants of land to the church and to prince William, the surviving son of the king. The provisions of this treaty had, however, not been carried out; and Henry, who had pressing need of money, and, at the same time, was determined to curb the growing power of the barons, called a council, and demanded the right to resume the domains of the crown. The council, on receiving the representations made to them of the king's necessities, gave their consent to the measure, and Henry placed himself at the head of a considerable force for the purpose of expelling those barons who might refuse obedience to the order of the council. In this manner he passed through the country, reducing the fortresses one by one, and as fast as they came into his hands causing them to be levelled with the ground. The castle of Bridgenorth, which was in the possession of Hugh de Mortimer, was stoutly defended by that chieftain; and during the siege, which lasted for some weeks, the king's life was saved by the self-devotion of one of his vassals. Henry was directing the attack in person, and had incautiously ventured under the castle walls, when an archer was observed taking aim at him. Hubert de St. Clair, one of his followers, immediately threw himself before the king, and received the arrow in his own breast. Henry supported him in his arms, and St. Clair in a few moments expired, entreating the king's protection for his only daughter, a child of tender years. The charge was accepted, and in after years was honourably fulfilled.

After considerable labour and many delays, Henry fully accomplished his designs. He destroyed the castles of Henry of Winchester, the brother of Stephen, who was compelled to quit the country. Other powerful chiefs, including the earls of Albemarle and Nottingham, were also deprived of their estates; and the king of Scotland resigned his territories in the north of England in return for the earldom of Huntingdon, which was conferred upon him by Henry. It is related that more than one thousand castles and strongholds, many of which were in the hands of men who grievously oppressed the people, or of licentious soldiers who lived by plunder, were destroyed in the course of this expedition. This act alone must have been of incalculable benefit to the country, and justified to some extent the expectations which had been formed from the character of the new monarch.

A.D. 1156.—Geoffrey Plantagenet, the brother of Henry, having called upon him to fulfil the oath which he had taken over the dead body of their father, to relinquish the earldom of Anjou, received a refusal. It is stated that Henry had been absolved from his oath by the pope; but whether this be so or not, he had no intention of giving up any part of his vast possessions. Geoffrey, naturally indignant at being deprived of his right, and supported by the court of France, declared war against his brother, and obtained possession of several fortresses.

Henry crossed the channel with a considerable force, and having done homage to the French king, persuaded him to resign the cause of Geoffrey. The English army, composed of men of Saxon descent, rejoiced at the opportunity of indulging in their long desired vengeance against the Normans; and they engaged in the war with so much vigour and success, that the cause of Geoffrey rapidly lost ground, and he was compelled to sue for terms of peace. A treaty was concluded, by which the younger brother resigned all claim to his lands and the title of the earl of Anjou, in return for a pension of one thousand English or two thousand Angevin pounds. In the following year (1157) he was elected to the government of Nantes.

Having reduced his brother to submission, Henry made a progress through his continental provinces, attended by a splendid retinue, and was received everywhere with acclamations. Henry surrounded himself with the pomp and magnificence of royalty, in a manner which had never before been witnessed in his dominions, and which was equalled by no other monarch of his time.

A.D. 1157.—Having returned to England, the king marched an army into Flintshire, for the purpose of reducing the Welsh, who still fought bravely for independence, to permanent submission. No opposition was made to his advance until he had reached the mountainous district about Coleshill-forest. Here the English troops were suddenly attacked by a large force, while passing through a narrow defile, where it was impossible to form in order of defence. The slaughter was very great. Several wealthy Norman nobles and knights of fame were dragged from their horses, and put to the sword; and the earl of Essex, the royal standard-bearer, threw down the standard, and took to flight. Had the king not displayed those military talents which were hereditary in the family of the Conqueror, he would probably have shared the fate of his nobles, and the whole army would have been lost. Henry, however, drew his sword, and rushing into the midst of his flying troops, forced them to turn upon their assailants. Ultimately, he fought his way through the pass, and collected his forces together in the open country. Owen Gwynned, a chief of the mountaineers, attempted to decoy him once more among the mountains; but Henry took his way to the sea-coast, and passed along the shore, building castles, wherever an opportunity presented itself, and clearing portions of the country from the dense forests with which it was covered.

After a campaign of a few months, the Welsh gave in their submission to the king, and did homage for their territory. On the departure of the invaders, however, the mountaineers resumed their former attitude of hostility, and made incursions in the surrounding country, at intervals, for many years afterwards. In consequence of his flight at the battle of Coleshill, the earl of Essex was publicly accused of treason and cowardice by Robert de Montfort. The question was referred to a trial by arms, or a

* Roger of Hoveden.

duel between the accuser and accused, in the presence of the king and his court. The earl of Essex was defeated in the combat; but the king, instead of sentencing him to death, as was customary in such cases, contented himself with seizing the estates of Essex, and condemning him to pass the rest of his life as a monk in Reading Abbey.

Geoffrey Plantagenet did not live long to enjoy the dignity of his new government of Nantes. At the time of his election, Lower Brittany included men of two distinct races, one of which spoke the Celtic or Armorican language, and the other the Roman language, which has been already described as forming, in the twelfth century, the common language of France and Normandy. The latter people formed the majority of the dwellers in the towns, and the city of Nantes, among others, was inhabited by them exclusively. The two races entertained an inveterate

Entry of Henry and Eleanor into Winchester.

hostility towards each other, and, on the election of Geoffrey, the people of Nantes maintained a government altogether distinct from that of the Armorican lords. On the death of Geoffrey (A.D. 1158), the city fell under the authority of Conan, the hereditary count of Brittany, who also possessed estates in Yorkshire, with the title of earl of Richmond. Henry then set up a claim to the free city of Nantes, as a portion of the inheritance to which, as the heir of his brother, he was entitled. The inhabitants in vain represented that Geoffrey had been elected by them of their own free will, and that they had no desire to elect all his family. Henry was actuated by the prospect of getting possession of the whole of Brittany, and affecting to regard duke Conan as an usurper, confiscated his estate and title of Richmond. Then crossing the channel with a large army, the king appeared before the walls of Nantes, and compelled the citizens to expel Conan, and to pay allegiance to himself. Henry then garrisoned the town with a body of his troops, and took possession of the rest of the country between the Loire and the Vilaine.

Anticipating the alarm this great increase of his territory would cause in the French court, Henry sent there as ambassador Thomas à Becket, who had already shown himself one of the ablest and most unscrupulous of the king's ministers. Henry afterwards followed in person, and a treaty was concluded, by which the French king undertook to maintain his neutrality. Louis, after his divorce from Eleanor, had married Constance of Castile, who had born to him a daughter. Henry affianced his eldest son to the young princess, who was delivered up to one of the

The Pope conducted by the Kings of France and England. (See page 183.

Anglo-Norman barons, and her dower was confided to the custody of the knights of the Temple, to be restored on the celebration of the marriage.

Henry then proceeded to secure the possession of the whole of Brittany by an alliance with Conan, to whose daughter, then but five years old, he affianced his youngest son, Geoffrey, who was only eight years of age. By this treaty Conan was placed in possession of Brittany for his life, on condition that at his death the future husband of his daughter was made heir to his power. The fears of the French king were aroused once more by this alliance, which it was evident would one day place the whole of western France under the power of the Anglo-Normans. Louis attempted to procure the pope's interdict of the marriage, on the ground that Conan was the descendant of a bastard daughter of the grandfather of Henry II. The pope Alexander III., however, refused to recognise such consanguinity, and the marriage was celebrated in the year 1166.

Not satisfied with the success which had hitherto attended his schemes of aggrandisement, Henry took proceedings to obtain the earldom of Toulouse, preferring a claim in right of his wife, which certainly was without any just foundation. William, duke of Aquitaine, the grandfather of Eleanor, had married Philippa, the only daughter of William, earl of Toulouse. That portion of the Salic law which precluded a female succession being in operation in the country, the father of Philippa sold the province to his brother Raymond of St. Gilles, whose posterity subsequently held possession of it. At the time of Eleanor's marriage with Louis, she had insisted upon her right to the earldom of Toulouse, and her husband had marched an army to defend the claim. The earl, however, concluded an alliance with Constance, sister of the king of France, and by this means retained possession of his power.

Henry now proclaimed his right to the earldom on the same ground that Louis had previously preferred. Raymond of St. Gilles, grandson of the contemporary of the Conqueror, prepared to defend his patrimony, and applied for assistance to his brother-in-law, the king of France. While Louis was making ready to take the field, Henry adopted a measure to which may probably be traced the decline of the feudal system in England. According to the laws, the services of a vassal to his sovereign in the field was limited to forty days, a period which would have been nearly consumed in transporting the English troops to the scene of action. Henry, therefore, determined to levy a sum of money in lieu of the services of his vassals, both in England and Normandy, and to apply the sum so raised to organising a body of troops, which would be free from all authority but his own, and would be ready to follow him without any limit of time. This tax was called the *scutage*, and amounted to three pounds English, or forty Angevin shillings, for each knight's fee. There are stated to have been 60,000 of these fees in England, which would, therefore, yield £180,000, an immense sum in those days.

The army thus raised by Henry was composed, for the most part, of the infantry of the Low Countries, who were already distinguished for their stubborn resolution and gallantry in combat. The king was accompanied by Thomas à Becket, who had lately been made Chancellor of England, and also by Malcolm, king of Scotland, and Raymond, king of Arragon, with whom Henry had formed an alliance. The town of Cahors was quickly reduced, and the English army marched upon Toulouse, which was defended by the citizens under Raymond, in conjunction with a small body of troops which the king of France had marched to their aid.

Becket, who, although in holy orders, marched in warlike equipments at the head of 700 knights and men at arms, displayed great energy in the field. He advised the king to take advantage of the weakness of the garrison, to make an immediate attack upon the place; but Henry, whose audacity was tempered by profound calculation, hesitated to commit an act in direct defiance of those feudal laws in whose support he had himself the strongest interest. As earl of Anjou, Henry was the hereditary Seneschal of France, and he asserted that he could not make an attack upon the troops of his feudal suzerain.

A second French army advancing to the defence of Toulouse, Henry raised the siege, and committing the command of his forces to Becket, returned with a small body of troops into Normandy. Thither the chancellor soon afterwards followed him, having taken possession of a few castles on the banks of the river Garonne. A campaign ensued which lasted for a few months, on the frontiers of Normandy; and was concluded in the year 1160 by a treaty, according to the terms of which, the eldest son of Henry did homage to Louis for the dukedom of Normandy.

The condition of the people of Languedoc and the surrounding country, from this time, began rapidly to decline. Placed between two great powers whose rivalry resulted in frequent acts of hostility, the inhabitants attached themselves first to the cause of one and then to that of another, according to circumstances, and were by each alternately protected and deserted, betrayed and sold. From the time of the twelfth century, the people of the south enjoyed no tranquillity, except when the kings of France and England were at war. "We rejoice," said the troubadours in their songs, "when peace is broken between the Easterlings and the Tornes,"* under which names they described the French and English. They possessed an early civilisation; but they appear to have been too much devoted to the pursuits of pleasure and the dreams of romance, to be fitted for self-government. In addition to the disturbances which they suffered from without, they were engaged in perpetual quarrels amongst themselves. They were fond of war, but rather for the excitements it afforded than for the purposes of ambition. They loved the pomp and splendour of the tented field, the armour flashing in the sun—the turmoil and the struggle, the honour and reward. At a word from a fair lady, they were ready to fly off to Palestine, to engage in a quarrel about which they cared little, or were equally willing to risk their lives in hazardous and foolhardy achievements at home. They were a people in whom the gifts of imagination, and a taste for the beautiful in art and nature, were not restrained by prudence. Actuated by no spirit of union or foresight, they were content to bask carelessly in the passing sunshine, regardless of the future.

The peace between Henry and the king of France only lasted one month. The queen, Constance, died without leaving a son, and Louis, anxious to obtain an inheritor of his throne, contracted a union within three weeks after-

* E m'plai quan la trega es fracha
Dels Esterlins e dels Tornès.—*Poesies des Troubadours.*

wards with Adelais, niece of king Stephen and sister of the earl of Blois. By this alliance with his enemies, Henry perceived that his own connection with the French king was endangered, and having secretly obtained the authority of the pope, he caused the marriage of his son Henry, who was seven years old, and the daughter of Louis, to be immediately solemnised. Henry, then, according to the terms of the treaty, obtained the dowry of the princess from the knights Templars, who were not prepared to resist at once the authority of the pope and the power of the English king. Louis immediately declared war, and banished the Templars from his kingdom. Henry contented himself with defending his territories from the attacks made upon them until peace was once more concluded, through the intervention of the pope.

At this period, as had already been the case on a previous occasion, there were two popes. One of these, Victor IV., occupied the papal chair at Rome, under the protection of the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa of Germany; and the other, Alexander III., was living in exile in France. The latter was generally regarded in that country and in England as the legitimate pontiff, and Henry and Louis alike acknowledged his authority, vieing with each other in offers of protection and in reverence. It is related by the Norman chronicler that when the two kings met the pope Alexander at the town of Courcy-sur-Loire, they dismounted from their horses, and each taking hold of one of the bridle reins of his mule, walked at his side on foot, and so conducted him to the castle.

The reconciliation thus effected was followed by a brief period of tranquillity, both in England and Normandy, and when the flame of war again broke out, its origin was to be referred to no foreign enemy, but to the machinations of a man whom Henry had raised to the height of power and dignity.

CHAPTER XLIII.

Reign of Henry II. continued—Career and Death of Thomas à Becket.

Among the yeomen of Saxon race whose necessities compelled them to seek the service of the Norman barons as esquires or attendants, was a man whose romantic history, no less than the extraordinary career of his son, caused his name to become famous to a degree which rarely happened in those days to one of obscure birth. Gilbert Becket was born in London in the reign of Henry I. It would appear that his real name was Beck, and that his Norman masters changed it into Becket, which was corrupted by the Anglo-Saxons into Beckie. At the beginning of the twelfth century Gilbert Becket, or Beckie, followed his lord to the Holy Land. After having taken part in the ordinary dangers and sufferings of the soldiers of the cross, Gilbert was made prisoner, and reduced to slavery. In this condition the Saxon yeoman attracted the notice of the daughter of a Saracen chief, and gained her love. With her assistance, he succeeded in effecting his escape, and returning to England. The paynim damsel, however, found herself unable to live without him, and she determined to find her way to the distant country, whither he had told her he was going. She knew only two words of English, which were *London* and *Gilbert*. With the help of the former she obtained a passage in a ship which carried returning pilgrims and traders; and by means of the latter—running from street to street, and repeating "Gilbert! Gilbert!" amidst the wonder and derision of the crowd, she found the man she loved.* Gilbert Becket appears to have received her tenderly and honourably, and having asked the advice of the clergy, he caused her to be baptised, and having changed her name to that of Matilda, he married her. The strange circumstances of this marriage caused it to become famous throughout the country, and it was made the subject of various popular ballads and romances, two of which are still extant.†

About the year 1119 Gilbert and Matilda had a son, who was named Thomas, and who was destined to occupy a prominent position in the history of his time. At an early age he was sent to France to receive his education, and to get rid of that English accent which, under the Norman domination, would have been fatal to his advancement in life. This object was attained so completely that, on his return, Thomas Becket found himself able to enter the most refined society of the court without giving any indication of his Saxon origin, either by word or gesture. The youth was ambitious, and he quickly found means to turn this talent to account. He obtained the favour of one of the Norman barons who lived near London, and he joined in all the amusements of his patron. In this position his talents acquired him a great reputation among the courtiers, to whom his ready wit recommended him, no less than the obsequious demeanour which he sedulously cultivated.

Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury, having heard of the young Englishman, desired to see him, and having been pleased with the interview, took Becket into his service. He caused him to take deacon's orders, gave him the appointment of archdeacon of his church, and employed him in various negotiations with the Holy See. In the reign of Stephen, Becket was employed by the partisans of Matilda to procure the pope's prohibition of the intended coronation of the king's son. The mission was attended with complete success, and on the accession of Henry II., Becket was presented to him as one who had done his cause good service. Henry extended his favour to the young archdeacon, and Theobald, the primate, who exercised the functions of first minister to the kingdom, finding his growing infirmities rendered him unfit for the duties of his office, delegated to Becket a great part of his power. A few years afterwards the archdeacon was raised to the office of chancellor of England, or keeper of the seal of the three lions, which was the symbol of the Anglo-Norman power. The king also gave him the wardenship of the Tower of London and of the castle of Berkhampstead, and placed in his hands the care and education of the heir to the throne.

These various appointments yielded large revenues, which were spent by Becket in the greatest luxury and magnificence. He kept in his house, which was furnished with great splendour, a numerous retinue; and it is related that there were in his pay 700 men-at-arms, well mounted and equipped. His tables were covered with choice viands, served upon costly plate; and the trappings of his horses were adorned with gold and silver. The haughtiest nobles of the court regarded it as an honour to visit this magnificent son of a Saxon peasant; the foreigners who enjoyed his hospitality were never suffered to depart without some costly present.

* Chronicle of Johannes Bromton. † Jamieson's Popular Songs.

It is related by Fitz-Stephen, who was Becket's secretary, that when the chancellor proceeded on his embassy to Paris, he was attended by many barons and lords, and a large body of knights, besides a great number of attendants and serving-men. His passage through France resembled a triumphal procession, and the train of sumpter-horses and wagons, the hounds and hawks, the falconers and pages, seemed worthy of some powerful king. When he entered a town, two hundred and fifty boys went before him singing songs; these were followed by huntsmen leading their hounds in couples; then came eight wagons, each drawn by five horses, and attended by five drivers; and these were succeeded by twelve sumpter-horses, on each of which rode a monkey with a groom behind on his knees. Next to the sumpter-horses came the esquires, each carrying the shield and leading the horse of his master; then the youths of gentle birth, who were also esquires, but were exempted from the more menial services of that office; then the knights, priests, and officers of the household; and, lastly, the chancellor himself, attended by his friends. As this procession passed through the towns, the people looked on with wonder, asking each other what manner of man the king of England must be when his chancellor travelled in such magnificence.

At this period Henry lived on the most intimate terms with the chancellor, who was skilled in the sports of the field, and whose wit and vivacity fitted him for a boon companion. The chancellor was not deterred by his sacred calling from sharing in the pleasures of the king, which were as licentious as those of his Norman predecessors. Henry, who could so well support the royal dignity as occasion required, appears to have had a natural tendency to gaiety and frolic. On one occasion, when the chancellor was riding at his side through the streets of London in stormy weather, there came towards the royal party a poor old man in tattered clothes. "Would it not be well," the king asked, "to give that poor man a warm cloak?" The chancellor replied with proper gravity, "It would, sir; and you do well to turn your eyes and thoughts to such objects." The king then immediately rejoined, "You shall have the merit of this act of charity;" and turning towards the chancellor, he seized hold of the new cloak which he wore, lined with ermine, and endeavoured to pull it from his back. Becket resisted for some time, and in the struggle both had nearly fallen from their horses to the ground; but at last the chancellor wisely let go the cloak, and the king gave it to the beggar, who went on his way wondering and rejoicing.

A man entirely delivered up to ambition is necessarily, to some extent, unscrupulous; and there is no doubt that Becket was content to sacrifice principle whenever it stood in the way of his advancement. He, however, possessed many good and great qualities; and during the period of his chancellorship, his influence with the king was used in promoting reforms and instituting measures which were calculated to promote, in a high degree, the welfare of the people. To his exertions may be attributed the restoration of tranquillity throughout the country, the revival of commerce, the reforms in the administration of the law, and the decline of the power of the barons. Although himself a churchman, Becket did not hesitate to attack the extravagant privileges of the bishops. At the time of the war against the earl of Toulouse, the clergy refused to pay the tax of scutage, which, as already related, was levied by Henry, giving as their reason that the church forbade them to shed blood.* Becket, however, resolved to compel them to pay the tax; and while by so doing he exasperated his own order against him, he secured the goodwill of the king.

Not long after the Conquest the Norman clergy in England began to display great moral depravity. Murders, rapes, and robberies were frequently committed by them; and, according to the laws passed by the Conqueror on the institution of episcopal courts, the offenders could only be brought to justice by men of their own order. Thus it happened that the crimes committed by licentious priests were seldom punished, and they increased to a frightful extent in consequence of this immunity. It is related that from the time of the accession of Henry II. to the year 1161, not less than one hundred homicides had been committed by priests who still remained securely in possession of their benefices. To put an end to these disorders, the only course which appeared feasible was to take away from the clerical order those privileges which had been conferred by the Conqueror, and Henry determined to execute this measure. The primacy of Canterbury had long carried with it an authority second only to that of the pope himself, and it was impossible to carry out the intended reform unless a man devoted to the royal authority, and careless of the interests of the church, were seated in the archiepiscopal chair. It was evident that for this purpose no fitter man could be found than Becket; and on the death of Theobald, the archbishop of Canterbury (A.D. 1161), the king recommended his chancellor to the bishops as the person to succeed to the primacy.

Contrary to all precedent, the bishops unanimously opposed the choice of the king, and delayed the election during thirteen months. At length Henry sent a peremptory demand that the candidate he had chosen should be immediately appointed; and the prelates, not daring to make any further resistance, obeyed the king's command.

The chancellor was ordained priest in the year 1162, and on the following day was consecrated archbishop, and appointed to the vacant see. Immediately a change took place in him so remarkable that those who saw him found a difficulty in recognising him as the same man. He threw off his gorgeous apparel, removed the splendid furniture from his house, gave up the intimacy with the gay nobles who had been his friends, and became the friend of the poor, the beggars, and the Saxons. He even affected poverty, and amidst unbounded wealth, and in the possession of power second only to that of the throne, lived the life of an anchorite. He was clothed in a coarse gown, allowed himself only herbs and water for sustenance, and assumed a deportment of the utmost gravity and humility. Thus Becket at once kicked down from him the ladder by which he had risen, and now, no longer obsequious towards his sovereign, he determined to maintain to the utmost the privileges of the church. Never was there a change of life more sudden, or one that excited so much indignation, on the one hand, or so much admiration on the other. The new archbishop became the idol of the poor, and especially of his own countrymen, while the king and his favourites regarded him with the deepest anger and aversion.

* The scutage, or escutcheon-tax, was so called because it was due from all persons who possessed a knight's fee, or an estate which would maintain a man-at-arms, provided he failed to present himself at the stated time with his écu, escutcheon, or shield, upon his arm.

Under these circumstances, it was evident that a rupture must soon take place. Henry determined to use every means to destroy the power which he had so imprudently created. He began a series of attacks against the archbishop. In the year 1162 he removed from him the archdeaconry of Canterbury, and promoted a dissolute monk of Normandy, named Clérambault, to the abbacy of St. Augustin, at Canterbury. Instigated by the king, the new abbot refused to take the oath of obedience to the primate, according to the law, which dated from the Conquest. Becket defended the authority of his see, and the matter was referred by the abbot to the pope Alexander III. Strange as it may seem, the decision was given against the primate, and those privileges which had been abolished by Gregory VII., at the desire of the Norman conquerors, were now restored by Alexander at the prayer of a Norman priest.

Becket, whose anger was excited by this unexpected defeat, proceeded to acts of retaliation. In the following year he claimed a number of estates and castles, including that of Rochester from the king, and that of Tunbridge from the earl of Clare, on the ground that they had originally belonged to the see of Canterbury. Had such restitution been given, it would have tended to overthrow the legal claim of many of the barons to their estates; great alarm was, therefore, excited, and the demand met with a determined resistance. The barons urged their prescriptive rights, but Becket replied briefly that there could be no prescription for injustice, and that the estates wrongly obtained must be restored. In the words of a modern historian, the sons of the companions of William the Bastard thought the soul of Harold animated the body of him whom they had themselves made primate.

The archbishop proceeded to follow up his attack by appointing a priest to a benefice on the lands of a Norman baron, named William de Eynsford. William, like the rest of the Normans, assumed the right of disposing of the churches on his manor, and he expelled the priest sent by Becket. The baron was immediately excommunicated by the archbishop, in defiance of a law passed by Henry, that no vassal of the crown should be excommunicated without the royal consent. The king ordered the sentence to be remitted, and after some delay Becket yielded, though with evident reluctance. The king's animosity was rather increased than appeased by a consent so reluctantly given.

In the year 1164, Henry proceeded to mature his plans for placing the clergy under civil jurisdiction; and at a general assembly of lords, lay and spiritual, he demanded the consent of the prelates to the proposed revival of ancient customs. The reply made by Becket and his coadjutors was that they assented, "saving the honour of God and their order." The king angrily broke up the council, and deprived the archbishop of the castle of Berkhampstead. A few days afterwards Becket expressed his readiness to assent to the king's demands, and a great council was convened at Clarendon, in Wiltshire (March, 1164), for the purpose of receiving the assent formally. When the moment came for Becket's signature to be given, he refused it; accusing himself of folly for having promised to observe the king's laws, whatever they might be. The entreaties of the barons were without effect, and the enactments were completed without his signature.

The king now proceeded to more severe measures against his former favourite. Another council was called at Northampton, before which Becket was summoned to appear, and was charged with contempt of the king's authority. He was called upon to pay various heavy fines, and to give an account of his receipts from different benefices during his chancellorship, the balance due to the crown, which he had kept back, being stated to be 44,000 marks. Becket was now convinced that his ruin had been determined on, and for several days he was confined to his bed by illness, brought on by these anxieties, and was unable to determine on the course he ought to pursue. At length his indomitable mind recovered its ordinary tone, and he determined to resist the decision of the king and the council. Having celebrated mass, he proceeded to the court dressed in his robes, and holding in his right hand the archiepiscopal cross. As he entered the hall, the king, indignant at seeing him in the robes of authority, rose up and passed into an inner room, leaving the archbishop standing in the hall. Becket, who remained calm and undaunted, seated himself on a bench, holding his cross erect. Presently the bishop of Exeter entered, and, in the name of his colleagues, entreated the primate to obey the king's commands. A refusal was followed by the entrance of the rest of the bishops, who renounced him as their primate, and appealed to the authority of the pope. Becket sternly answered, "I hear;" and made no other reply.

According to one of the chroniclers the archbishop was accused before the council of magic arts, and the earl of Leicester advanced into the hall to read his sentence, but Becket interrupting him, refused to recognise the authority of a lay tribunal, and himself appealed to the pope's decision. With these words he rose from his seat, and carrying the cross in his hand, strode slowly through the crowd towards the door of the hall. A murmur arose as he passed, and some of the courtiers, whose mean spirit derived satisfaction from striking a falling man, accused him of perjury and treason, and catching up straw from the floor, threw it in his face. Becket stopped short, and facing his assailants, said, in cold and haughty tones, "If the sacredness of my order did not forbid it, I would answer with arms those who call me perjurer and traitor." * He then mounted his horse, and proceeded to the house where he lodged, followed by a crowd of the inferior clergy and the people, among whom he was exceedingly popular, and who received him with acclamations.

Rejected by the rich, the archbishop opened his house to the poor. That same night he caused a bountiful supper to be laid out in the hall, and in all the chambers of the house. The doors were then thrown open, and the beggar by the wayside, the outcast, and the hungry, were invited to enter freely. All who came were made welcome, so that the house was filled with guests—the archbishop himself supping with them, and presiding at the repast.

In the dead of night, when the visitors at this strange banquet had taken their fill and departed, Becket disguised himself in the dress of a monk, and, accompanied by two friars, escaped from the town of Northampton. A hasty journey of three days brought him to the fens of Lincolnshire, where he remained a little while concealed in a hermit's hut. On resuming his journey he called himself by the Saxon name of Dereman, and passed without sus-

* Gervase; Fitz-Stephen.

picion to the coast. It was at the end of November, and the weather was cold and stormy, but Becket preferred the risks of the sea to those which awaited him on shore, and, embarking in a small boat, reached the harbour of Gravelines in safety. Thence he resumed his journey, as before, on foot: having encountered many privations, the primate and his companions reached the monastery of St. Bertin, in the town of St. Omer.

Here Becket waited the result of the applications he had made to Louis of France, and to the pope Alexander III. It was not long before replies were returned entirely in his favour. Louis was glad of an opportunity of annoying and injuring Henry by extending protection to the archbishop, and Alexander supported his cause as being that of the church and of justice. He was desired to retain the archiepiscopal dignity which he had resigned into the hands of

Progress of Thomas à Becket through France. (See page 184.)

the pope, and the abbey of Pontigny, in Burgundy, was given to him as a place of residence.

On the news of Becket's flight, the king immediately proclaimed a sentence of banishment against all the kindred of the archbishop, young and old, women and children. It is even related that these unhappy exiles were made to swear that they would present themselves before Becket, so that he might see the misery of which he had been the cause. Thus it happened that his retirement at Pontigny was disturbed by the visits of these poor people, who vainly implored him to obtain the remission of their sentence. Becket relieved their wants as far as was in his power, and obtained for many of them the protection of the pope and the king of France.

Defeat of the English by the Welsh at Berwin. (See page 188.

The banished prelate appears to have supported with contentment his sudden loss of power and return to the

condition of poverty. His life at this period was, however, far from being an idle one. Much of his time was occupied in writing; and he received frequent letters both from friends and enemies. The English bishops appear to have sent him epistles full of reproaches, for no other reason than to add to the weight of misfortune and humiliation which pressed heavily upon him. The lower ranks of the people, however, retained their attachment to him, and secret prayers were offered up for his success in his undertakings, and for his safe return.

Meanwhile, Henry had conducted an expedition into Wales, which resulted in a complete defeat of the royal forces. In the year 1164, a young man, nephew of Rees-ap-Gryffith, king of South Wales, was found dead under suspicious circumstances; and it was believed that he had been murdered by persons in the employ of a Norman baron of the neighbourhood. To avenge his death, Rees-ap-Gryffith collected troops from all parts of the Welsh mountains, and made successful inroads upon the neighbouring counties. The king, quitting for a time his quarrel with Becket, gathered a considerable army, and in 1165 passed into Wales. The rebels gave way before him, retreating, as their custom was, to the shelter of the mountains. Henry, however, overtook them before they had gained their fastnesses, and defeated them in an engagement on the banks of the Cieroc. Pursuing them still further, the English troops reached the foot of Berwin, where they pitched their encampment. A violent storm arose, and the streams which poured down from the hills deluged the camp and flooded the valley. The mountaineers took advantage of this circumstance, and, collecting on the ridges of the Berwin, attacked the disordered forces of the king, and defeated them with considerable loss. Henry, who on ordinary occasions was less addicted to acts of cruelty than had been the case with his ancestors, was subject to fits of ungovernable passion; and he now determined to revenge himself upon the persons of the hostages which had been placed in his hands in the year 1158 by the Welsh chiefs. The men had their eyes torn out, and the faces of the women were mutilated by having their noses and ears cut off. It is related that the unhappy victims of these barbarities were the sons and daughters of the noblest families in Wales.

A.D. 1166.—Soon after the return of Henry from this expedition, an insurrection broke out in Brittany, which compelled his presence in that province. The government of Conan dissatisfied the people, who were oppressed by the Breton nobles, and could obtain no redress from their prince. Henry entered Brittany with a large body of troops, and was met by a deputation of the priests and the people, who placed the redress of their grievances in his hands. Conan was compelled to resign his authority, and the government passed into the hands of Henry, under the name of his son Geoffrey, who was married to the daughter of Conan. The country, however, was not restored to tranquillity. Other disturbances took place in various places, and were put down one after the other by Henry, who at length succeeded in overcoming all opposition to his government. He instituted various reforms, encouraged trade, and, under his rule, the land once more enjoyed prosperity.

When the news of the king's arrival on the continent reached Thomas à Becket, he left Pontigny, and proceeded to Vezelay, near Auxerre. At the festival of the Ascension, Becket addressed the crowd assembled in the great church, and while the bells were solemnly tolled, and the candles burnt at the altar, the archbishop pronounced sentence of excommunication against whosoever held to the Constitutions of Clarendon, or kept possession of the property of the see of Canterbury. He mentioned by name several of the Norman favourites of the king, and among others Richard de Lucy, Ranulph de Broc, Jocelyn Baliol, and Hugh de St. Clair.

When Henry heard of this new act of hostility on the part of Becket, he was at Chinon, in Anjou. Allusion has already been made to the fits of passion with which he was sometimes seized, and on this occasion his fury was altogether ungovernable. He exclaimed that it was attempted to kill him body and soul; that he was surrounded by none but traitors, who would not attempt to relieve him from the persecutions inflicted upon him by one man. He threw his cap from his head, flung off his clothes, and rolling himself in the coverlet of his bed, began to tear it to pieces with his teeth. When his passion had in some degree subsided, he wrote letters to the king of France and to the pope, demanding that the sentences of excommunication should be annulled, and threatening that if Becket continued to receive shelter from the Cistercians at Pontigny, all the estates in the king's dominions belonging to that order should be confiscated. The pope promised the king the satisfaction he required, and Becket, driven from his asylum at Pontigny, removed to Sens, where he remained under the protection of the king of France.

A series of petty wars now took place between Louis and Henry, and were concluded by a peace in the year 1169. The matrimonial alliance previously agreed upon between Louis and the king of Arragon was broken off, and the princess Alice of France was betrothed to Richard, second son of Henry. At the time when this treaty was concluded, efforts were made by the pope and the king of France to effect a reconciliation between Henry and Becket. A meeting took place between the two kings at Montmirail, in Perche, and thither Becket, having consented to give in his submission to his sovereign, was conducted. When the archbishop arrived in the king's presence, he expressed his willingness to submit to him in all things; but he introduced the qualifying clause which he had formerly used,—"saving the honour of God." The king angrily rejected such obedience, saying that whatever displeased Becket would be declared to be contrary to the honour of God, and that these two words would take away all the royal authority. The archbishop persisted in requiring such a reservation; and while the nobles present accused him of inordinate pride, the two kings rode away from the spot without giving him any salutation. The archbishop departed from the place much dejected. No man now offered him lodging or bread in the name of the king of France; and on his journey back, the primate of all England was compelled to ask alms from the priests and the people.

Another conference which took place was also broken off suddenly, and resulted in a quarrel between Louis and Henry. Peace was, however, once more concluded between them, and Henry, fearing that the pope might ultimately sanction Becket's proceedings, and permit him to lay all England under an interdict, reluctantly promised to conclude final terms of reconciliation with the archbishop. On the 22nd July, A.D. 1170, a solemn congress was held in a

meadow between Freteval and La Ferté-Bernard, in Touraine. After terms of peace had been arranged between the two kings, a private conference took place between Henry and Becket. They rode together to a distant part of the field, and conversed with something of their old familiarity. The king promised to redress the grievances of which Becket complained, and the usual forms of reconciliation took place, with the exception of the kiss of peace, which the king now, as on a previous occasion, refused to give. "We shall meet in our own country," said the king, "and then we will embrace." Becket undertook to render to the king all due and loyal service, while Henry promised to restore the privileges and estates of the see of Canterbury. It is related that, to the astonishment of all present, when Becket bended the knee on parting from his sovereign, the king returned the courtesy by holding the stirrups of the man whom he had refused to kiss.

Some delay took place on the king's part in the fulfilment of these conditions, and Becket, who was compelled to borrow money to make the journey, remained for a while on the coast of France. Sinister rumours reached him there; he was told that enemies were lying in wait for him in England, and that if he again set foot in that country it would be at the risk of his life. The lands of the church could only be restored by driving out the possessors, who were haughty barons, not unlikely to seek vengeance on the man to whom they owed their ruin. Deadly enemies of Becket were found also among men of his own order. He carried with him the pope's letter of excommunication against the archbishop of York and the bishop of London, who would probably accept any means of escaping the impending disgrace. Considerations such as these, however, had never deterred Becket in the execution of his plans, and did not in the least affect him now. With a spirit untamed by reverses he declared that he would go back to England though he were sure of losing his life on touching the shore. The letters of excommunication he forwarded before him by a trusty messenger, who delivered them in public to the prelates whom they concerned.

A vessel having been sent by Henry to convey him to England, he landed at Sandwich, December 1, 1170, and was received with great rejoicings by the people, who flocked from all parts of the neighbourhood to meet him. The nobles, however, held aloof, and the few whom he saw did not attempt to conceal their hostility. Three barons, who met him on his way to Canterbury, are said to have drawn their swords and threatened his life, and were only restrained from violence by the entreaties of John of Oxford, the king's chaplain, who had accompanied Becket from France.

Proceeding on his way, the archbishop passed through Canterbury to Woodstock, where he endeavoured to obtain an interview with prince Henry, the eldest son of the king. The prince had been the pupil of Becket, who now, in his difficulties, desired, if possible, to secure his influence and goodwill. The interview was forbidden by the royal command, and Becket was ordered to proceed at once to his diocese, and there to remain. The time of Christmas was approaching, and the archbishop retraced his steps, escorted on the way by the poor people, armed with such coarse weapons as they could obtain. Various insults were offered to the prelate by persons of the opposite party, who were anxious to provoke his followers to a quarrel, which would afford a pretext for attacking and murdering him. His faithful guard, however, contented themselves with protecting the person of their archbishop, and received these insults with imperturbable coolness.

The royal order which confined the primate to his diocese was published in the towns, and with it another edict, which declared that whoever looked upon him with favour should be regarded as an enemy of the king and the country. Signs like these were not to be mistaken; and it scarcely needed the acute intellect and foresight of Becket to perceive that his end was approaching. On Christmas day he preached to the assembled crowd in Canterbury cathedral, choosing as his text the solemn words, *Veni ad vos, mori inter vos*—I have come to die among you. He told the people that whereas one of their archbishops had already been a martyr, another would soon be so also; but he declared that before he died he would avenge some of the wrongs which had been inflicted upon the church. He then proceeded to excommunicate several of those persons from whom he had received insults since his return to England.

The prediction of Becket was soon followed by its fulfilment. The three bishops who had been excommunicated by the pope's letters immediately hastened to cross the Channel, and presenting themselves before Henry in Normandy, demanded redress. "We entreat you," they said, "in the name of your kingdom and of its prelates. This man is setting England in flames. He marches with a number of armed men, both horse and foot, going about the fortresses, and endeavouring to obtain admission into them." Henry heard this statement, and burst out into a violent fit of rage. "What!" he cried; "a man who has eaten my bread—a beggar who first came to my court riding a lame pack-horse, with his baggage at his back—shall he insult the king, the royal family, and the whole kingdom, and not one of the cowards who eat at my table will deliver me from such a turbulent priest?"*

These words proved to be the death-warrant of the archbishop. Four knights who were present, Richard Brito, Hugh de Morville, William Tracy, and Reginald Fitzurse, bound themselves by an oath to support each other to the death, and suddenly departed from the palace. There is no evidence that the king was acquainted with their design, or anticipated that his hasty words would be so speedily acted upon. On the contrary, it is recorded that, while the knights were hastening towards the coast, a council of the barons of Normandy, assembled by the king, was engaged in appointing three commissioners to seize the person of Thomas à Becket, and place him in prison on a charge of high treason.

The conspirators had departed, and, if their absence was perceived, its cause was not suspected. On the fifth day after Christmas they arrived in the neighbourhood of Canterbury, and having collected a number of armed men, to overcome any resistance that might be offered, they first summoned the mayor, and called upon him to march the citizens who were armed for the king's service to the house of the archbishop. On his refusal, they proceeded thither without more delay, and the four conspirators, with twelve men, abruptly entered the archbishop's apartment. Becket was at the dinner-table, with his servants in attendance. He saluted the Normans, and desired to know what they

* Vita. B. Thomæ Quadripart.

wanted. They made no reply, but sat down gazing at him intently for some minutes. At length Reginald Fitzurse rose up and said that they were come from the king to demand that the persons excommunicated should be absolved, the suspended bishops restored to their benefices, and that Becket himself should answer the charge of treason against the throne. The archbishop replied that not he, but the pope, had excommunicated the bishops, and that he only could absolve them. "From whom, then, do you hold your bishopric?" Fitzurse demanded. "The spiritual rights I hold from God and the pope, and the temporal rights from the king." "What, then, the king did not give you all?" "By no means." This reply was received against the door. At this moment the sound of the vesper bell was heard, and Becket then rose up, and said, that since the hour of his duty had arrived, he would go into the church. Directing his cross to be carried before him, he passed slowly through the cloisters, and advanced to the choir, which was enclosed by a railing. While he was ascending the steps leading to the choir Reginald Fitzurse entered the door of the church, clad in complete armour, and waving his sword, cried, "Come hither, servants of the king!" The other conspirators immediately followed him, armed to the teeth and brandishing their swords.

It was already twilight, which, within the walls of the dimly-lighted church, had deepened into blackest obscurity.

Murder of Thomas à Becket.

with murmurs by the knights, who twirled their gauntlets impatiently. "I perceive that you threaten me," the archbishop said; "but it is in vain. If all the swords in England were hanging over my head, they would not alter my determination." "We do indeed dare to threaten," said Fitzurse, "and we will do more." With these words he moved to the door, followed by the others, and gave the call to arms.

The door of the room was instantly closed, and the attendants of Becket entreated him to take refuge in the church, which communicated with the house by a cloister. He, however, retained his place, although the blows of an axe, which Fitzurse had obtained outside, resounded Becket's attendants entreated him to fly to the winding staircase which led to the roof of the building, or to seek refuge in the vaults underground. He rejected both of these expedients, and stood still to meet his assailants. "Where is the traitor?" cried a voice. There was no answer. "Where is the archbishop?" "Here I am," Becket replied; "but here is no traitor. What do ye in the house of God in warlike equipment?" One of the knights seized him by the sleeve, telling him he was a prisoner. He pulled back his arm violently. It is related that they then advised him to fly or to go with them, as though they repented of their evil design. The time and the scene, the sacred office of Becket, and his calm courage, were well calcu-

lated to make an impression upon men peculiarly susceptible to such influences, and if they hesitated we must attribute it to these causes rather than doubt the ruthless intention with which they came.

Once more they called upon him to absolve the bishops; once more he refused, and Fitzurse, drawing his sword, struck at his head. The blow was intercepted by the arm of one of the prelate's servants, who stepped forward to protect his master, but in vain. A second blow descended, and while the blood was streaming from his face, some one of his assailants whispered him to fly and save himself. Becket paid no heed to the speaker, but clasped his hands and bowed his head, commending his soul to God and the saints. The conspirators now fell upon him with their swords, and quickly despatched him. One of them is said to have kicked the prostrate body, saying, "So perishes a traitor."

The deed thus accomplished, the conspirators passed out of the town without hindrance, but no sooner had they done so than the news spread throughout the town, and the inhabitants, in the utmost excitement and indignation, assembled in crowds in the streets, and ran towards the cathedral. Seeing the body of their archbishop stretched before the altar, men and women began to weep, and while some kissed his feet and hands, others dipped linen in the blood with which the pavement was covered. It was declared by the people that Becket was a martyr, and though a royal edict was published forbidding any one to express such an opinion, the popular feeling still manifested itself. The archbishop of York returned to his pulpit and announced the violent death of the archbishop to be a judgment from heaven, and that he had perished in his pride, like Pharaoh. It was preached by other bishops that the body of the traitor ought not to be laid in holy ground, but that it should be left to rot on the highway, or hung from a gibbet. It was even attempted by some soldiers to seize the corpse; but the monks, who had received an intimation of the design, buried it hastily in the crypt of the cathedral.

Louis, king of France, seconded the feeling of the English people with regard to this cowardly murder. He wrote to the pope, entreating him to punish, with all the power of the church, that persecutor of God; a Nero in cruelty, a Julian in apostacy, and a Judas in treachery.

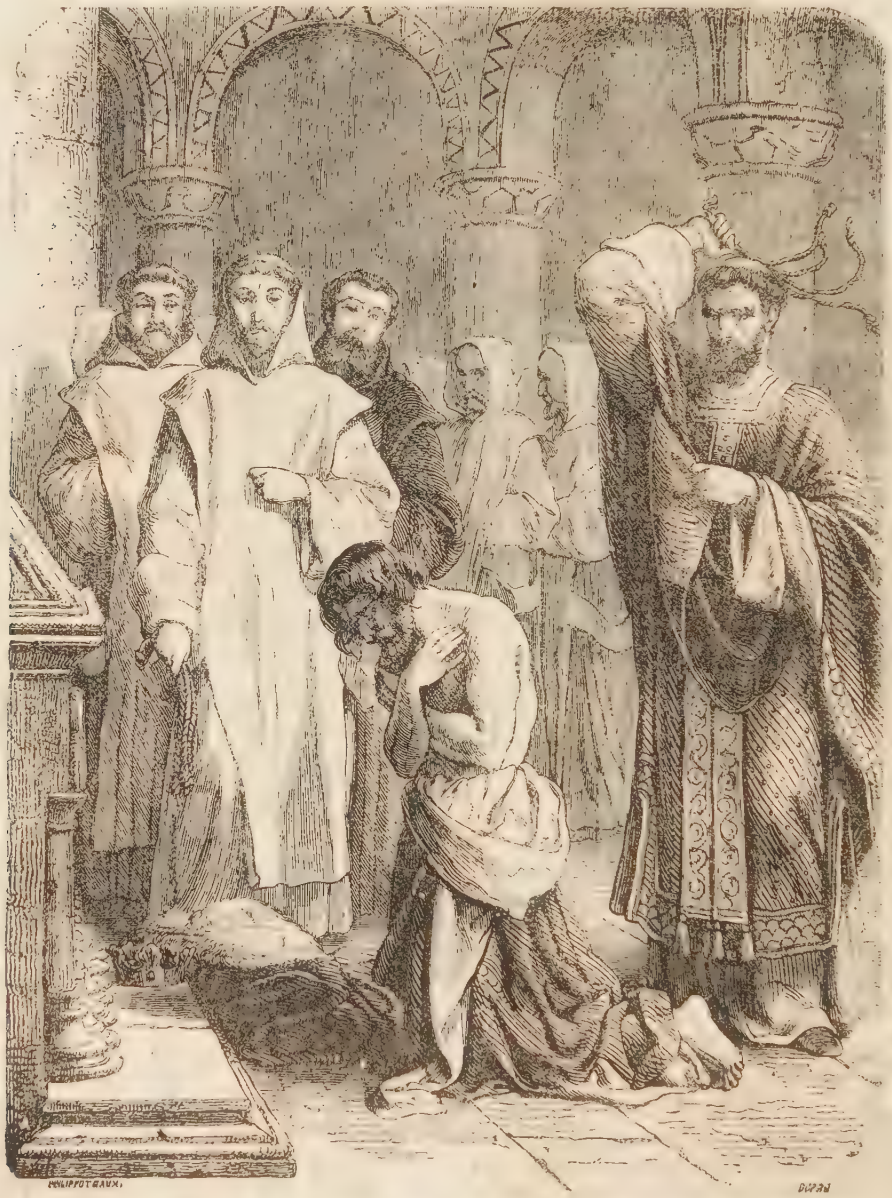
The opinion of the French court, which has been held also by some historians of our own country, was that Henry was guilty of the murder, having known or directed the designs of the conspirators. The question must always remain to some extent doubtful; but the balance of evidence as well as of probability is decidedly in favour of his innocence. When the intelligence was first conveyed to him, he displayed extreme grief, shutting himself up within a private room, and refusing either to see his friends or to taste food for three days. The extraordinary penance which he afterwards underwent at the tomb of Becket, and which will be described hereafter, would at first appear to prove his consciousness of guilt; but that penance may as reasonably be regarded as having a political object, and as being intended to overcome the prejudice against him among the people, who universally believed that an atonement ought to be made by the king. He may also have felt that without having directly ordered the death of the archbishop, he was nevertheless to some extent guilty of that crime, in having used words which might without difficulty be construed to have such meaning.

Whether Henry did or did not direct the assassination of the archbishop, it is not improbable that he may more than once have desired the death of his troublesome servant. But the manner of that death—a prelate, whose office was regarded with the highest veneration, slain at the altar; an old man butchered in cold blood, not by robbers, but by soldiers and knights of fame;—such a death, with the indignation it excited, was well calculated to induce feelings of remorse in the breast of the king. He immediately sent legates to Rome, to offer assurances of his innocence to the pope Alexander, who threatened to place the whole kingdom under an interdict, as a punishment for the outrage upon Heaven and the church. Some time elapsed before Alexander changed his purpose and was prevailed upon to confine his anathema to the actual murderers and their abettors.

In the year 1172 a council was held at Avranches, at which the king and the legates of the pope were present, and which was attended by a great multitude, both of the clergy and of the people. Here Henry voluntarily swore, in what was considered the most solemn manner—that is to say, over the sacred relics—that he had no concern in the murder of the archbishop, and that he had not desired his death. We must therefore either believe him to have been innocent, or regard him as utterly destitute of religious feeling, as well as entirely free from those superstitious tendencies of the age which influenced, to some extent, even the hard and ruthless minds of the Conqueror and his sons.

On reviewing the remarkable career of Thomas à Becket, it appears extremely difficult to form a just estimate of his character. That he frequently acted independently of principle, and displayed qualities better suited to a soldier than a priest, is beyond question. That his sudden conversion was mere hypocrisy, his piety assumed, and his aims altogether selfish,—accusations which have frequently been brought against him,—is much less certain. When the religious habit was first assumed by Becket, he accepted it as a step to power, and with little regard for the sacred functions it conferred upon him; but when he was called to a higher office, and he felt that the dignity of his order was placed in his keeping, he determined to support that dignity. What were the precise character of the motives which actuated him, it is in vain to inquire; but it is at least possible that he was sincere in the course he pursued, and that he believed the interests of religion to be identified with the power of the church. Allusion has already been made to the benefits conferred upon the nation by the reforms which he introduced, and to the veneration with which the people regarded him. The popular regard is not always to be taken as a criterion of excellence, for men are apt to be attracted by a showy and noisy benevolence, rather than by silent and unobtrusive virtue; but in process of time the true is distinguished from the false, and the instincts of the people are rarely long deceived. Neither the mitre which he wore, nor the Saxon blood which flowed in his veins, could have placed the archbishop so high in the affections of the nation, unless there had been also high and sterling qualities in the man. Well-authenticated accounts have reached us of his conduct at the time of his death,—that hour when the mask of the hypocrite usually falls away, and something of his true

character seldom fails to show itself. At this time, then, we find Thomas à Becket presented to us in an aspect which must command the respect even of those who take the worst view of his previous life. With far more courage than his knightly assassins, we see him refusing to attempt a flight, which might have shown a consciousness of guilt; preserving, in the face of death, a calm and undaunted



Henry II. doing Penance at the Tomb of Thomas à Becket.

brow; and, as we are told by one of the chroniclers, employing his last words in securing the safety of his friends and servants.*

It is worthy of note that the only primate who, since the Conquest, and previously to the time of Becket, had placed himself in opposition to the will of his sovereign, was Anselm, who, although a Norman by birth, was essentially English in sympathies, and who exerted himself in the cause of the people against their oppressors. Anselm had attempted to revive the old custom of ecclesiastical elections, which had been abolished by the Conqueror. Being successfully opposed at Rome, as well as persecuted in England, the archbishop was compelled to take refuge in France. From his place of retirement he wrote, and Becket afterwards echoed the words, "Rome prefers gold and silver to justice; what counsel or redress can a man obtain there who has nothing to give?" The primates who succeeded Anselm were more easily moulded to the will of their sovereign; they were Ranulph (or Raoul), William of Corbeil, and Theobald, who was the immediate predecessor of Thomas à Becket.

* On being told that he must die, Becket replied, "I resign myself to death; but I forbid you, in the name of the Almighty God, to injure any of those around me, whether monk or layman, great or small."—Vita. B. T. Quadripart.

The Siege of Waterford. The City taken by Assault.

CHAPTER XLIV.

Reign of Henry II. continued—Conquest of Ireland—Rebellions of the Princes—Wars between the Kings of France and England—Death of Henry II.

WHILE the life of Thomas à Becket was drawing to a close, events were taking place in Ireland which led to the submission of the whole of that country to the English crown. It does not fall within the scope of this history to relate in detail the various internal quarrels and disturbances which ultimately placed the island at the mercy of a small invading force; it is sufficient to glance briefly at the condition of the people, and the position of affairs at the time to which we are now referring.

The inhabitants of the island, called in ancient tongues

Ierna, Invernia, Ibernia, or Ireland, were undoubtedly of Celtic origin, as the language still spoken by a majority of the people serves to prove. They were of the same race with the mountaineers of Scotland, and, like them, were originally known by the name of Scoti, or Scots. Descended from a people who in former times had inhabited Britain, Gaul, and a large portion of Spain, they bore the characteristics of a southern origin. The Irish were distinguished from the northern races by their dark hair and complexion, their strong passions—either of love or hate, and their enthusiastic temper. Previous to the introduction of Christianity their condition appears to have been entirely uncivilised; those old fragments of Irish history which would lead us to a different conclusion being little else than fables and bardic traditions. When Christianity was carried into the country, the people embraced it readily. Poetry and literature were cultivated to a greater extent than in any other part of western Europe, and remained in a flourishing condition while the learning of the Continent was on a decline. This advance of civilisation is to be referred to the labours of the celebrated St. Patrick, who was born at Enon, in the district of Tabernia (near the modern town of Boulogne-sur-Mer). He entered upon his apostolic mission in 432, and died at an advanced age, A.D. 472. The immediate results of his teaching were seen in the erection of many churches and monasteries, in which literature was cultivated with so much success, that students repaired to the Irish schools from all parts of Europe. This state of things endured for several centuries, until a permanent check was given to the progress of learning by the incursions of the Northmen, who, from the year 748 to the middle of the tenth century, continually visited the country.

At the period of the English invasion, the people of Ireland are described of being of tall and elegant forms, and having a ruddy complexion. Their clothing was of the simplest kind, and was spun from the wool of their sheep. The art of war had made little progress among them; and their arms consisted of a short lance, or javelin, a sword about fifteen inches in length, and a hatchet of steel. Their houses were built of wood, interlaced with wicker work, in a manner which displayed considerable ingenuity. They were extremely fond of music, and in the use of their favourite instrument, the harp, they excelled the neighbouring nations. Giraldus Cambrensis,* who has left us an account of the conquest of Ireland, admits their superiority in this respect.

When Henry Plantagenet ascended the English throne, he entertained the project of taking possession of Ireland; and, following the example of the Conqueror, he first took measures to obtain the sanction and assistance of the pope to his enterprise. The papal chair was at that time occupied by Nicholas Breakespeare, called Adrian IV., the only Englishman who ever wore the tiara. He was a man of obscure birth, but of considerable intelligence, who had quitted his native land at an early age, and travelled through France to Italy, where he entered an abbey as secretary. Unaided by wealth or connections, his abilities gradually raised him to the dignity of abbot, from which he rose to be bishop, and ultimately pope. Adrian assented to the request of Henry, and issued a bull, authorising him to undertake the conquest of Ireland. The king, however, was deterred, by the advice of his counsellors, and by the urgency of other affairs, from entering upon the expedition at that time; and the papal bull was deposited in the royal treasury at Winchester, without being promulgated.

Fourteen years later, some Norman and Flemish adventurers, who had previously settled in Wales, were invited to Ireland by one of the native princes. Dervorgilla, a lady of remarkable beauty, wife of Tiernan O'Ruarc, a powerful chief, was carried off by Dermot MacMurrogh, king of Leinster. Dermot, who was a man of cruel and arrogant temper, had many enemies, and he now found himself attacked on different sides by O'Ruarc, and those who supported his cause. Ultimately, a general combination was formed against the king of Leinster, and he was compelled to quit the country.

He proceeded to ask the support of King Henry, who was then in Aquitaine. Henry, occupied at that time with other affairs of importance, received him graciously, and gave him letters, authorising the subjects of the English crown to take up arms in his favour. Furnished with these, Dermot returned to England, and, after some delay, he obtained the assistance of Richard de Clare, surnamed Strongbow, earl of Pembroke, to whom he promised his daughter Eva in marriage. Subsequently he made arrangements with Robert Fitz-Stephen and Maurice Fitz-Gerald, to whom he agreed to give the town of Wexford, with other rewards, in return for the services they were to render him.

In the year 1169, Fitz-Stephen, with his companions, accompanied by 140 knights and 300 men-at-arms, crossed over to Ireland, and landed at Bannock-bay. MacMurrogh, who had previously returned to the country, and had remained in concealment, advanced to meet his friends. The combined forces having attacked and reduced Wexford, advanced against the prince of Ossory, whom they defeated with great slaughter. The Normans slew their adversaries, who possessed no defensive armour, and cut off their heads with their battle-axes. It is related that three hundred bleeding heads were brought and laid before MacMurrogh, and that he turned them over, to see which of his enemies had been slain. On coming to the head of one against whom he had a mortal hatred, he took it up by the hair, and, "horribly and cruelly, tore away the nose and lips with his teeth." This savage chieftain, however, had a regard for his plighted word, and he fulfilled his promise of placing Fitz-Stephen in possession of Wexford, while districts on the coast between Waterford and Wexford were given to other of his allies. These gifts of territory to foreigners called forth the utmost indignation among the Irish confederate chiefs, who, at a council held at the royal seat of Tara, in Meath, declared the king of Leinster to be a national enemy, and prepared to make common cause against him.

Strongbow, earl of Pembroke, did not set sail for Ireland until the autumn of the same year (1169). He landed near to Waterford, with a force of two hundred knights and tw thousand men, and was immediately joined by the Normans who had preceded him. The combined forces, having been arranged in battle array and with banners flying, advanced to attack the city. The citizens made a gallant resistance,

* Giraud de Barri, commonly known as Giraldus Cambrensis (or Gerald the Welshman), was the grandson of a Norman and a Welshwoman, and was born in Wales. He was present in Ireland during the time of many of the events about to be related.

and were probably excited to desperation by the ruthless character of MacMurrogh, and the fate which they expected would await those who might fall into his hands. The earl of Pembroke, who was well skilled in the art of war, had command of the forces, and led the assault. A little house of timber standing half upon posts was observed without the walls, and the assailants having hewn down the posts, the house fell, together with a piece of the wall. The troops poured through the breach thus made, and captured the city, killing the inhabitants without mercy.

Leaving a strong garrison, the Normans marched to Dublin, which town, as well as that of Waterford, had been founded by the Danes. Supported by reinforcements raised by MacMurrogh, the invaders took the city of Dublin with little resistance, and elated by a course of uninterrupted successes, made incursions upon the surrounding country. King Henry, however, received the news of these events, and his jealousy being excited at such an important conquest being attained by his vassals, he issued a proclamation forbidding any vessel to leave his dominions for Ireland, and ordered all his subjects then in that country to return to England by the next Easter, on pain of the forfeiture of all their estates, and of perpetual banishment from the realm. A consultation was held among the Normans, and Raymond Fitz-William, surnamed Le Gros, nephew of Fitz-Gerald and Fitz-Stephen, was despatched on a mission to Henry, to prevail upon him to recall the proclamation, and to remind him of the letters he had given to MacMurrogh, authorising Englishmen to take up arms in his cause. Henry received the message without returning any answer, or, according to some of the chroniclers, he replied by confiscating the estates of Strongbow in Wales.

While the earl thus found himself cut off from all reinforcements of men and arms, the Normans in Leinster were suddenly attacked by the men of Danish race, who were settled on the north-east coast of Ireland, and who now allied themselves with the natives against the new invaders. They attacked Dublin, but without success. The Normans, however, dreading the formidable league against them, made a second application to Henry through Hervey Fitz-Maurice. Strongbow himself was then ordered to proceed to the court, and after some delay he obtained an audience. The earl agreed to surrender to the king the town of Dublin, with the larger of the other towns on the coast; in return, Strongbow was permitted to retain his other acquisitions in Ireland, and was restored to the possession of his estates in Wales.

MacMurrogh having died previously to this interview, Strongbow had assumed the title of king of Leinster, in right of his wife Eva; and he now found himself reduced from the condition of a sovereign prince to that of steward of the English crown. In the year 1171, Henry set sail from Milford to take possession of his new territories. The royal force consisted of 400 vessels, containing about 5,000 men, among whom were 500 knights. Henry landed at the Crook, near Waterford, October 18th, and was received by the Norman chiefs, who tendered him their homage. The army commenced its march by way of Cashel to Dublin, meeting with no resistance. The inhabitants, overawed by the numbers and the martial equipment of their enemies, fled in dismay before the advancing troops, and the native kings of the south had no other alternative than to surrender at the summons of the conqueror, and offer their allegiance to him.

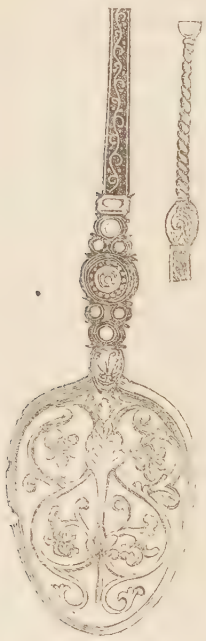
Having established his court at Dublin, Henry styled himself king of all Hibernia, and summoned all the Irish chiefs to his presence. Many of them obeyed; but the kings of Connaught and Ulster, entrenched in their native mountains, refused to acknowledge his authority, and the sovereignty of Henry was limited by a line drawn across the island, from the mouth of the Shannon to that of the Boyne. All the pomp which distinguished the Plantagenet court was displayed in Dublin, and the Irish people—lively, impressible, and fond of novelty—derived pleasure from contemplating the splendid appearance of the Norman arms, horses, and accoutrements of war. The majority of the clergy also gave their support to the invader, and welcomed him as one bearing the authority of the church. Henry promulgated the bull of pope Adrian; and various reforms and observances of canonical discipline were introduced into the Irish church.

Henry's former haughtiness towards the clergy, and his resistance to the encroachments of the papal see upon the rights of the crown, had now disappeared. Not only did he require the support of the bishops to secure his new conquest, but the popular feeling excited throughout his dominions by the death of Becket rendered it necessary for him to conciliate where he had formerly threatened. This course of action met with temporary success, and the pope Alexander III. issued a bull confirming that of his predecessor Adrian, and ratifying the king's title to the possession of Ireland.

After he had remained in the country for a few months longer, Henry received news which compelled his immediate return to England. Having appointed officers to the chief places of power in the island, he sailed from Wexford on the 17th of April, 1172, and landed at Portfinnan, in Wales.

At this time the king had four legitimate sons living,—Henry, Richard, Geoffrey, and John, of whom Henry, the eldest, was eighteen years of age. An equitable provision had been made for each of them, it being intended that Henry should succeed to the English throne, as well as to the territories of Normandy, Anjou, and Maine. Richard, who was the favourite of his mother, was to receive her estates of Aquitaine and Poitou; Geoffrey, who had married the daughter of the duke of Brittany, was to succeed to that province; and John was to be made king of Ireland. It will be remembered that during the archbishopric of Thomas à Becket, the king had taken measures to abolish the primacy, by causing his eldest son to be crowned king by the archbishop of York. The political enemies of Henry exerted themselves to turn this impolitic measure to their own advantage, by exciting the son to rebellion against the father, who was now called the elder king. In these attempts they were seconded by queen Eleanor, whose affections had been alienated from the king by his numerous infidelities. She was a woman of strong passions, and determined to make her children the instruments of her vengeance. Through her efforts the people of Aquitaine and Poitou attached themselves to the cause of the younger king, and many of the nobles of those provinces became his counsellors and confidants. They spared no pains to excite the ambition of the youth, and persuaded him that his father had abdicated the throne in

his favour, and was no longer entitled to hold the sovereign authority. At the coronation of Prince Henry, his wife Margaret, the daughter of Louis of France, was not permitted to receive the crown with her husband, and this omission was resented by the French king, to whom it afafforded a pretext for embracing the cause of his son-in-law. A peace having been concluded by the intervention of the pope, the wrong was repaired, and Margaret was crowned queen. Henry then permitted the young couple to visit the French court, and during their stay Louis continued to foment the dissatisfaction of the son, and to excite him to rebellion against his father.



Spoon of the 12th century, used at the Coronation of the Kings of England.

On his return to England, the younger king did not hesitate to demand that his father would resign to him either the throne of England or one of the two duchies of Normandy and Anjou. Henry advised him to have patience until the time when all these possessions would become his. The son quitted his father's presence in anger, and from that day, in the language of an old historian, no word of peace ever more passed between them.

Henry II., determined to watch the conduct of his rebellious heir, caused him to travel with him through the duchy of Aquitaine. When the court was at Limoges, Raymond, earl of Toulouse, who had quarelled with the king of France, came to offer his allegiance to Henry; and having done so, he warned him to look well to the proceedings of his wife and son, and to place the fortresses of Aquitaine and Poitou in a state of defence. The king profited by the warning, and, without making his suspicions known, he contrived to visit the fortresses, and to assure himself of the fidelity of the commanders. On the return from their visit to Aquitaine, the king and his son stopped to sleep at the town of Chinon; and during the night young Henry quitted the place, and fled to Alençon. A pursuit was instituted, but without success; and the young man reached Argenton, whence he escaped by night into the territories of the king of France.

On the news of this escape being brought to the old king, he displayed all the energy of former years, and, mounting on horseback, he proceeded along the frontier of Normandy, inspecting the defences, and preparing against attack. Messengers, with a similar object, were also despatched to the captains of the royal garrisons in Anjou, Aquitaine, and Brittany. Meanwhile the two princes, Richard and Geoffrey, followed their brother to the French court, and queen Eleanor also endeavoured to make her escape, dressed in man's clothes. She was, however, taken prisoner by those sent in pursuit of her, and was placed in an imprisonment, in which she remained, with very slight intermission, during sixteen years. Henry now sent envoys to the French court, demanding his son, and also requiring to know the intentions of the king of France. The ambassadors were received in full court, in the presence of young Henry and his brothers. When, according to the usual form, they commenced their message by enumerating the titles of their royal master, they were interrupted by Louis, who declared that there was but one king of England, namely, the young prince now standing before them.

Young Henry was recognised by a general assembly of the barons and bishops of France as having the only lawful right to the English throne. Louis VII. made oath to this effect, and after him the brothers of Henry and the barons of the kingdom. A great seal was made with the arms of the king of England in order that Henry might affix that sign of royalty to his documents of state.

His first acts were grants of land and estates to the barons of France and the enemies of his father who were willing to join the confederacy. Among these were William, king of Scotland, who was to receive the territories of Northumberland and Cumberland, conquered by his predecessors; Philip, earl of Flanders, to whom was promised the earldom of Kent and the castles of Dover and Rochester; and the earl of Blois, who was to have Amboise, Château-Reynault, and five hundred pounds of silver from the revenues of Anjou. Other donations were made of a similar kind, and the young king sent messengers to Rome to obtain the sanction of the pope. It is remarkable that he demanded the assistance of the papal see on the ground that he could not submit to see the murder of his foster-father Thomas à Becket remain unpunished, and the murderers still living in security and affluence. He also promised large concessions to the church and an extension of its privileges. The court of Rome, however, accustomed to act with caution, was in no hurry to reply to this despatch, and waited the course of events.

Meanwhile the cause of the rebellious son was embraced by many powerful chiefs, even among the vassals of the English king. Not a few recalled former acts of arrogance or oppression for which the present occasion offered the prospect of vengeance; others, who were young in arms, and of turbulent and adventurous spirit, were easily induced to take up arms in favour of the gay young prince. In England the earls of Leicester and Chester were the principal supporters of his cause.

Henry, who was then in Normandy, saw himself deserted by many of the lords of his court, and it is said that even the guards of his chamber, those who were entrusted with the care of his person and his life, went over to his enemies. In circumstances such as these, with dangers thickening around him, the indomitable character and powerful mind of the king were displayed to their full extent. He possessed in a high degree those political and military talents which were hereditary in the family of the Conqueror, and although the loss of his followers was to him a cause of the greatest grief and despair,* yet he preserved a calm and cheerful countenance, pursuing his usual amusements of hunting and hawking, and showing himself more than usually gay and affable towards those who came into his presence.†

* Girald. Cambrens. † Matth. Paris.

The king placed his chief reliance upon his command of money, with which he hired into his service a number of foreign mercenaries, including twenty thousand Brabançons. He also exercised all the arts of diplomacy to detach the neighbouring princes from the cause of his son, and sent messengers to Rome, acknowledging himself as the pope's vassal, and entreating his assistance. The terms used by the king in his letter, in which the kingdom of England was called the patrimony of St. Peter, probably tended in some degree to excite and justify those pretensions of the see of Rome, which in subsequent reigns produced such important results. The pope admitted the justice of the king's claims in opposition to those of his son, and confirmed the sentences of excommunication which the Norman bishops of Henry had issued against the adherents of the princes. He also sent a special legate across the Alps, commissioned to arrange terms of peace; but before the messenger arrived, the war had already commenced on the frontier of Normandy.

Allusion has already been made to the animosities existing between the different races inhabiting the continental territories of Henry II. The rebellion of the princes fomented this national hatred, and opposing nations took part in the contest, and having once drawn the sword, were not easily induced to lay it aside. While the king of France and Henry the younger were marching an army into Normandy, Richard had gone to Poitou, where most of the barons entered the field in his cause. Geoffrey met with similar success among the people of Brittany, who, with their former readiness for revolt, entered into a confederation for the purpose of securing their own interests, while ostensibly supporting the cause of their duke. The old king thus found himself attacked at several points simultaneously, while the troops whom he had at command were chiefly the Brabançon mercenaries, who, though valiant men-at-arms, were in fact little better than banditti. With a division of these troops Henry opposed the advance of the king of France, and ultimately compelled him to make a rapid retreat. Another division, which had been sent into Brittany, met with equal success against the insurgents, and the adherents of the princes were defeated wherever they showed themselves. King Louis, who possessed little persistence of character, soon grew weary of this war, as he had done on former occasions, and advised the rebellious sons to seek a reconciliation with their father. Henry consented to a conference, and the two kings met in a wide plain near to Gisors, where there was a venerable elm whose branches descended to the ground. In this spot, from time immemorial, all conferences had been held between the dukes of Normandy and the kings of France.

The conference was attended by the two princes, accompanied by the archbishops, bishops, and nobles of both countries. The king offered to his eldest son half of the royal revenues of England, with the same portion of the incomes of Normandy and Anjou. To the other princes he also offered estates and revenues. The king of France, however, was alarmed by these conciliatory proposals, and threw difficulties in the way of a pacification; encouraging the enemies of Henry to take measures for breaking off the negotiations. One of these men was Robert, earl of Leicester, who insulted Henry with open abuse, and even laid his hand upon his sword, as though he would have violated the truce by slaying his sovereign. He was, however, forcibly restrained by those who surrounded him. The tumult which arose was followed by a renewal of hostilities; and a desultory war, in which no engagement of importance took place, was continued during the rest of the year.

Robert of Leicester had returned to England for the purpose of joining Hugh Bigod, a powerful noble who adhered to the cause of the princes. The Scots, who had begun to make forays upon the lands in their neighbourhood, were also assuming a dangerous attitude; but were repulsed by Richard de Lucy, the king's high justiciary, who burnt their town of Berwick, and drove them back with considerable slaughter. On his return to the south he defeated the earl of Leicester, and took him prisoner. The Saxon peasantry of England appear to have been entirely indifferent to these disputes, and, therefore, remained quiet. The people of Normandy, also, were generally faithful to their sovereign, and it was among the recent conquests of Henry—in the provinces of Poitou and Aquitaine, Maine and Anjou,—that the rebellion gained ground. Two of the natural sons of the king, who were at that time in England, exerted themselves strenuously in the cause of their father, and one of these, Geoffrey, bishop of Lincoln, distinguished himself by various successes against the insurgent barons.

Meanwhile, Richard having fortified a number of castles of Poitou and Aquitaine, headed a general insurrection of the people of those provinces. Against him, in the year 1174, the king marched his Brabançon troops, having placed garrisons in Normandy to repel the attacks of the king of France. Henry took possession of the town of Saintes, and also of the fortress of Taillebourg, and in his return from Anjou, devastated the frontier of Poitou, destroying the growing crops as well as the dwellings of the people. On his arrival in Normandy he received news that his eldest son, with Philip, earl of Flanders, had prepared a great armament, with which they were about to make a descent upon the English coast. The king, whose movements on such occasions were unsurpassed for rapidity and energy, immediately took horse, and proceeded to the nearest seaport. A storm was raging as he reached the coast, but Henry immediately embarked; carrying with him as prisoners his wife Eleanor, and Margaret, the wife of his eldest son, who had not succeeded in following her husband to the court of her father.

Henry landed at Southampton, whence he proceeded to Canterbury, for the purpose of undergoing that extraordinary penance, to which some allusion has already been made. It is related that he rode all night, without resting by the way, and that when, at the dawn of day, he came in sight of Canterbury cathedral, he immediately dismounted from his horse, threw from him his shoes and royal robes, and walked the rest of the way barefoot, along a stony road. On arriving at the cathedral, the king, accompanied by a great number of bishops, abbots, and monks, including all those of Canterbury, descended to the crypt in which the corpse of Thomas à Becket was laid. Gilbert Foliot, bishop of London, addressed the people, and said: "Be it known to all who are here present, that Henry, king of England, invoking for his soul's salvation God and the holy martyrs, protests before you all that he never commanded nor desired the death of the saint; but, as it is possible that the murderers availed themselves of some words spoken imprudently, he implores

his penance from the bishops now assembled, and is willing to submit his naked flesh to the discipline of the rods."*

The king knelt upon the stone of the tomb, and stripping off part of his clothes, exposed his back to the scourge. Each of the bishops then took one of the whips with several lashes, used in the monasteries for penance, and each, in turn, struck the king several times on the shoulders, saying, "As Christ was scourged for our sins, so be thou for thine own." The rest of the monks present, to the number of about eighty, then took the whips; and it is said that many of these, who were of Saxon descent, gave their blows with vigour, so that the penance endured by the king was not merely nominal. The scourging did not end the acts of humiliation. Henry remained a day and a night prostrate before the tomb, during which time he took no food, and did not quit the place. The fatigue which he thus underwent brought on a fever, which confined him during several days to his chamber. The display of repentance, whether real or assumed, produced a reaction in the king's favour among the people, and he at once recovered the popularity he had lost. It happened that on the day when Henry was thus humbling himself before the tomb of Becket, one of his most powerful enemies had been taken prisoner. William the Lion, of Scotland, had made a hostile incursion into the lands of the English; and on the 12th of July, when he was amusing himself by tilting in a meadow with some of his nobles, he was surprised by Ranulph de Glanville, and captured, together with those who were with him. The English people,

Meeting of Henry and Louis on the Plain near Gisors.

* Matth. Paris.

deeply imbued with the superstition of the time, attributed this success to the favour of the martyred archbishop, and they flocked to the standard of the king. Henry was not long in recovering his strength; and, taking the field once more, he advanced against the rebellious barons, who gave way and fled at the sound of his approach. Many of their castles were carried by storm, and many were surprised before the inmates had time to escape. So many prisoners were taken, that, according to Giraldus Cambrensis, there were hardly cords enough to bind them, or prisons enough to hold them.

Having effectually repressed the revolt in England, Henry passed over with his army into Normandy. The allies made but a brief resistance, and in a few days raised the siege. Their numerous army retreated hastily before the forces of the English king, who pursued his advantage and compelled his adversaries once more to come to terms. Louis was again the first to withdraw from the contest, and proposed a conference for arranging terms of peace, to which the princes Henry and Geoffrey reluctantly assented.

Richard was supported in his rebellion by Bertrand de Born, lord of Haute-Fort, a distinguished warrior and poet, under whose teaching the natural daring of the prince was fostered, and he received a thorough training in the art of war. Richard at first refused to be included in the truce, but receiving no succour from his allies, he was un-

Penance of Henry before the Shrine of Thomas à Becket.—From an ancient painting on glass, engraved in Carter's Specimens of Ancient Sculpture and Painting.

inhabitants of Poitou and Brittany were not influenced by any veneration for St. Thomas à Becket, nor by the humiliations endured by the king at his shrine; they were not disheartened by their first defeat, and they rose again in rebellion. Meanwhile the earl of Flanders had resigned his project of invading England as soon as Henry's return thither and the various successes which attended him were made known. The earl turned his forces in another direction, and having been joined by Henry the younger king, and by Louis of France, laid siege to the town of Rouen. The attacking forces had scarcely sat down before the place, when Henry, who had returned in haste to the continent, appeared on the scene of action, and obtained possession of the stores of the French army. Louis and his able to maintain a defence, and, after the loss of many fortresses, he was compelled to return to his father, and implore his pardon. The king, stern and unrelenting towards ordinary offenders, acted with remarkable indulgence towards his rebellious children. An act of reconciliation was agreed upon, by which estates and revenues were assigned to each of the princes; and Henry made peace with the French king and the earl of Flanders, on condition that they restored the territories which they had occupied since the commencement of the war. On the other hand, Henry agreed to give up those lands which he had conquered, and to liberate all his prisoners, with the exception of the king of Scotland, who had been confined in the Castle of Falaise. In the following month of De-

cember (A.D. 1174), the Scottish king obtained his freedom by doing homage to Henry, and acknowledging himself as his vassal; thus sacrificing nominally the independence of his kingdom.

The three princes assented to the terms offered by their father, and promised future honour and obedience to him; the two younger taking the oath of fealty. In the year 1175 Henry returned to England with his eldest son, and the reconciliation between them was now so complete, that it is related that they ate at the same table and slept in the same bed.

At length the country enjoyed a short period of tranquillity, and eight years elapsed, during which there was peace at home and abroad, and the energies of the king were engaged in promoting reforms in the internal government of the kingdom. His reputation for wisdom and power at this time stood so high, that the kings of Navarre and Castile, who had been engaged in a prolonged warfare upon a question of territory, agreed to refer their dispute to the decision of the English monarch, and, it is related, that he delivered a wise and impartial judgment between them.

The government of Henry appears to have been in the main a just one, while it was firm, uncompromising, and well calculated to keep in check the unruly tempers of the Norman barons. During his reign the commerce of the country recovered from the depressed condition into which it had previously fallen. From remote parts of the East as well as from the Continent and from Ireland, trading vessels of foreign merchants brought articles of convenience and luxury to London. The wines of France, the furs of Normandy, the spices of Arabia, were among the merchandise imported at this time into England, and were employed to minister to that taste for pomp and magnificence which prevailed in the court of Henry II. London was already a populous city, noted for the wealth and luxury of its citizens, and in this reign it first became generally recognised as the capital of the kingdom. In the city and suburbs there were then about thirteen monasteries, and more than one hundred churches, with a fixed population of about 40,000 inhabitants. Industry and the arts were making rapid progress, and labourers and artificers of many different kinds were to be found in the city. Ludgate was at this time the western extremity of London, and where the Strand now pours east or west its stream of busy life, the ground was then divided into fields and orchards, which extended to Westminister. According to Fitz-Stephen, the biographer of Becket, the citizens of London received the title of barons, a statement which, to say the least of it, is improbable; but there can be no doubt that their wealth and intelligence at this period placed them in a higher position than is generally supposed. Other cities had attained to a high degree of importance, either as depôts for home produce or manufactures; as seats of learning; or as sea-ports, where the foreign commerce of the country was carried on. Exeter was a fine city, whither merchants resorted to trade for the mineral produce of the country, the mines of Cornwall and Devonshire already yielding a large annual revenue to the crown. Bristol conducted an extensive trade with Ireland and the north of Europe. Chester received ships from different countries with various kinds of merchandise. Lincoln was the seat of extensive home and foreign trade. Winchester and Gloucester were famous for their wines, the vine being then cultivated in the neighbourhood with considerable success. Among other cities mentioned by contemporary writers as being wealthy and populous, were York, Norwich, Lynn, Dunwich in Suffolk, Grimsby, Berwick, and Perth. Dublin is described as a splendid city, worthy to be placed in comparison with London. It is not known with certainty of what the exports of the country at this time consisted; but it is probable that they were confined to provisions, metals, and wool, or woollen goods. According to William of Malmesbury, England was the granary of Europe, where, in times of scarcity, other nations were sure of obtaining corn at a moderate price.

In the year 1182 fresh disputes arose between Henry and his sons. Richard having been called upon to do homage to his elder brother Henry for the provinces of Aquitaine and Poitou, positively refused, and immediately proceeded to put his fortresses in a condition of defence. In the beginning of the following year, Henry the younger and Geoffrey marched an army, part of which was composed of the Brabançon troops, against their brother, and several furious engagements took place between them. The king, alarmed at the grave appearance of the quarrel, recalled his two sons; and on their refusal took up arms in support of Richard. The family war was thus renewed under a new aspect, one of the sons fighting with his father against his two brothers. Contemporary historians speak with a fitting horror of these unnatural contests, and attribute their recurrence to an evil destiny which hung over the race of Plantagenet, as the result of some great crime which remained unexpiated. Revolting stories were related of the origin of the family, and of the deeds of its descendants; stories, of which some are evidently fabulous, and others, probably, had little or no foundation in fact. One of these, which is found in the chronicle of Johannes Bromton, may be given as an instance:—An ancient countess of Anjou, from whom king Henry was descended, was observed by her husband to evince great reluctance to entering a church, and when she did visit one, invariably to quit the edifice before the celebration of the sacrament. The husband, whose suspicions were excited, caused her one day to be forcibly detained by four esquires; but, at the moment of the consecration, the countess threw off the cloak by which she was held, flew out of the church window, and was never seen afterwards. It is related that prince Richard was accustomed to refer to this anecdote, and to say it was no matter of surprise that he and his family, who had sprung from such a stock, should be on bad terms with each other.

In those days poetry played an important part in the political events of the south of France. All transactions of war, and often those of peace, were proclaimed, made known, and commented upon in rhyme. The songs of the Troubadours circulating through the country, and repeated from mouth to mouth, occupied, in a great measure, the same place in the twelfth century that our newspapers do in the present day. Among the people of Aquitaine the queen Eleanor was held in great affection, as having been born among them, and the offences of which she was commonly reported to have been guilty were little regarded by a people whose own standard of morality was low. The long imprisonment with which she had been visited by her husband excited their chivalrous

feelings, and her wrongs were a favourite theme with the poets of her native province. The people rejoiced at an opportunity of punishing her husband, by any means at their command, and they therefore welcomed the new quarrels which had arisen between the sons and their father.

Henry and his son Richard marched against Limoges, which was in the possession of Henry the younger and Geoffrey. Within a few weeks the eldest brother deserted the cause of the men of Aquitaine, and gave in his submission once more to his father. Geoffrey, however, remained firm, and, supported by the people, continued his opposition. Prince Henry communicated with his brother through Bertrand de Born, and arranged that a meeting should take place between his father and Geoffrey, for the purpose of arranging terms of peace. When the king arrived at Limoges to attend this conference, he was surprised to find the gates of the town shut against him, and on presenting himself with a small escort before the walls, and demanding admittance, he was answered by a flight of arrows, one of which pierced his armour. An explanation ensued, when this occurrence was declared to be a mistake, and the king entered the town, and was met by Geoffrey in an open place, where they began the conference. During the interview a second flight of arrows were discharged from the walls of the castle adjoining, one of which struck the king's horse on the head. Henry ordered one of his esquires to pick up the arrow, and, taking it in his hand, he presented it to Geoffrey, with words of sorrow and reproach.

These attempts at assassination, as revolting in themselves as they were in defiance of the laws of chivalry, have been attributed by some historians to Geoffrey himself; but there is no sufficient reason for supposing that they occurred by the son's command. The hot-tempered soldiers of the south probably were little pleased at the prospect of a reconciliation between Geoffrey and his father, which would be made without regard to their interests; and it is not improbable that of their own accord they took this means of putting an end to the conference. It is stated that the archers who made the attack upon the king were not hired soldiers, but volunteers, who had recently joined the army of Geoffrey.

Henry the younger finding his attempts at mediation frustrated, declared that the men of Aquitaine were obstinate rebels, with whom he would never more make peace or truce, but that he would remain true to his father at all times. And yet a month had scarcely elapsed before he again quitted his father, and entered into a league with his adversaries. The pope now interposed, and by his command the Norman clergy excommunicated the disobedient son—a penalty which the perjuries of the prince had once before called down upon him. It seems improbable that Henry the younger was in the least disturbed by being under the ban of the church; but he was induced by some cause to return to his father, who received him once more with forgiveness. The prince promised, in the name of the insurgents, to surrender the town of Limoges; but if he had their warranty for doing so, they soon repented of their determination. The envoys of the king, who were sent to take possession of the town, were butchered within the walls, and the people, whose national spirit was thoroughly aroused, showed themselves resolved to put down all measures of reconciliation.

Not long after these events, the king received a message that his son, having fallen dangerously ill at Château-Martel, near Limoges, was anxious to see him. The king, who remembered the former attempts upon his own life, as well as the recent assassination of his soldiers, feared to trust himself again among these conspirators. He took a ring from his finger, and giving it to the archbishop of Bordeaux, desired him to convey it immediately to the prince, with the assurances of his father's love. The archbishop executed his mission, and prince Henry died with the ring pressed to his lips, confessing his undutiful conduct, and showing every sign of contrition. The younger king was twenty-seven years of age at the time of his death, which took place June 11th, 1183.

The stern Plantagenet is said to have been struck with grief at his son's death; but he was not of a nature to waste time in brooding over the irrevocable past. With his sorrow were associated feelings of anger against the rebels of Aquitaine, whose hostile attitude had prevented him from attending the deathbed of the prince. The king immediately collected an army, and on the day after the funeral of his son, he took the town of Limoges by assault, and followed up this success by seizing many castles of the insurgents, which he razed to the ground. Above all the confederates he pursued Bertrand de Born, to whose evil counsel he attributed the numerous acts of rebellion on the part of the princes. Henry besieged the castle of Haute-Fort, and within a short time it fell into his hands; and the chief, Bertrand, was conducted as a prisoner to the royal tent.

Bertrand, as has been already related, was not only a warrior, but a troubadour of renown, as eminent for gaiety and wit as for valour. He had made satirical poems upon the great king Henry, whom he had boasted that he held neither in respect nor fear. Henry now called him into his presence, to see how this gallant song-maker would comport himself in the face of death. "Bertrand," he said, "thou hast been heard to declare that thou never requiredst to use more than half thy wit, but now the time has come when thou wilt need it all." "My lord," the troubadour calmly replied, "I did, indeed, say so; and I said the truth." "And yet I think that thy sense has deserted thee," rejoined the king. "You are right, sire," Bertrand said, in slow and grave tones, "I lost it on the day that the valiant youth thy son expired; then, indeed, I lost all sense and reason." At the mention of his son, the king gave way to a passion of grief, and, to the astonishment of the court, the judge fainted away at the words of the prisoner. When Henry recovered, all thoughts of vengeance had passed away; the man who stood before him, whatever might be his crimes, had been his son's old friend, and for this cause the king spared his life. "Sir Bertrand, Sir Bertrand!" said he, "thou didst well to lose thy senses for my son's sake, for he loved thee better than any man in the world; and I, for love of him, give thee thy life, thy wealth, and thy castle."*

The death of the younger king caused a reconciliation between the several members of this dissevered family. Even the queen Eleanor was once more taken for a while into favour; and in her presence, the princes Geoffrey and Richard, as well as their younger brother, prince John,

* Poesies des Troubadours.

swore to a solemn bond of final peace and concord (A.D. 1184). The king, distrusting the untamed disposition of his elder sons, appears to have extended his chief favour and affection towards John. In a few months more the peace of the family was again disturbed by Geoffrey, who demanded the earldom of Anjou, and, on being refused, he went over to the French court. Here he passed his time in amusements and dissipations, waiting an opportunity for pursuing his schemes of ambition. One day, when engaged in a tournament, his horse was thrown down, and the prince himself was trampled to death by the horses of the combatants, A.D. 1186.

Six years before the death of Geoffrey, Louis VII. of France had died, and the throne became occupied by his son Philip II., a young and warlike prince. He it was who had welcomed Geoffrey to the French court, and who now invited his brother Richard to enjoy the same honours. The invitation was accepted, and a great friendship, which, however, was not destined to endure in after years, sprung up between the two princes. This state of things displeased Henry, who sent repeated messages to his son, desiring him to return to England. After various excuses and delays, Richard set out, apparently for that purpose; but on reaching Chinon, where one of the royal treasuries was placed, he carried off the contents by force. The money thus obtained was spent in fortifying castles in Aquitaine, whither he immediately proceeded. The people of that province, disgusted with the result of their previous rebellion, offered him no support, and after a short time he was compelled to return to his father. Henry, who had learnt to distrust the efficacy of the most solemn oaths, collected a great assembly of the clergy and the barons to bear witness to his son's new vows of good faith and duty.

In the following year (1187) the state of affairs in the Holy Land again attracted the attention of the princes of the west. Jerusalem, with its sacred treasures and relics, had again fallen into the hands of the Mahometans, who were headed by a young and warlike prince, Salah-ed-Deen, commonly called Saladin. The Christian conquerors of the Holy Land were suffering repeated defeats and misfortunes, and the pope sent messages to the princes of Europe, calling upon them to arouse themselves, and take up arms in the cause of the cross. Henry of England at once responded to the call, and Philip having determined on a similar course of action, a conference was determined upon between the two kings for the purpose of arranging a permanent peace. The meeting took place as before, in the field beside the elm tree, between Trie and Gisors. Several envoys of the pope were present, among whom was the celebrated William, archbishop of Tyre. The eloquence of this man is said to have tended greatly to the success of the negotiations. Suspending the settlement of their differences, the two kings swore to take up arms as brothers in the holy cause, and, in token of their pledge, each received from the archbishop a cross, which he attached to his dress, the cross of the king of England being white, and that of the king of France, red.

Having held a council at Mans to deliberate upon the measures to be pursued for taking the field, Henry returned to England; and a similar council, composed of the barons of the whole kingdom, was held at Gidington, in Northamptonshire. The lords determined that a tenth of all the property in the kingdom should be levied to meet the expenses of the crusade. The men of landed property who accompanied the royal army were to receive the sum levied on their lands, to enable them to take the field, the impost upon the other parts of the country being applied to the use of the crown. The sum of £70,000, which was raised by this means, proving insufficient, Henry extorted large sums of money from the Jews, and the people of that unhappy race were compelled, by imprisonment and other severe measures, to yield up their hoards. One-fourth of their whole property was thus extorted from the Jews, and probably, in many cases, a much larger sum.

Notwithstanding all these preparations, and the solemn oath of the two kings, the money thus obtained was not applied to the conquest of Jerusalem. A quarrel took place between prince Richard and Raymond of St. Gilles, and the people of Aquitaine, once more roused to rebellion, profited by the dispute, to form new leagues against the Plantagenet government. The king of France joined the insurgents, and attacked various castles and towns in the occupation of Henry. At length, after a profitless contest of several months, the two kings met once more under the old elm tree, resolved to arrange a peace. No mockery of solemn engagements took place on this occasion, and Henry and Philip separated in anger, without having been able to come to an agreement. The young king of France, enraged at the failure of the conference, cut down the elm tree, swearing, by the saints, that never more should a parley be held under it.

This latter revolt on the part of Richard, however unjustifiable it might be, was not without some pretext. According to an agreement, made in former years, between Henry II. and Louis VII., it had been determined that Richard should marry Alix, or Alice, King Louis's daughter, and the young princess was placed in the hands of Henry until she should arrive at a marriageable age. The war having broken out afresh, and the princes of England being separated from their father, the marriage was deferred, and it was currently reported that Henry had grown enamoured of her, and even that she had become his mistress. It is related that, at the time when his sons were at war against him, the king had determined to make Alice his wife, and that an attempt which he made to procure a divorce from the queen Eleanor was to be attributed to this partiality. The court of Rome, however, rejected his entreaties and presents, and refused the application.

What degree of truth may have existed in these reports, cannot now be determined, but it is certain that Henry detained the princess for a number of years, resisting the demands of Philip, and even the order of the pope, that the marriage between her and Richard should take place. Another plea urged by Richard in justification of his rebellion, was his belief that his brother John was intended to succeed to the English throne. No circumstances, however, are related by the historians giving reasonable grounds for such an opinion. In November, A.D. 1188, another conference took place, and this time at Bonmoulins, in Normandy. Philip demanded that his sister should be immediately delivered up to her affianced husband, and that Richard should be declared heir to the English throne in the presence of all the barons of the two countries. Henry, remembering the events which had followed the recognition of the claims of his eldest son, refused to repeat an act which might be attended with similar disturbances.

Richard, enraged at this refusal, turned from his father, and, placing his hands in those of the king of France, declared himself his vassal, and said that he committed the protection of his hereditary rights into his hands. Philip accepted his oath of fealty, and, in return, presented him with some towns conquered by the French troops from his father. Henry quitted the spot in violent agitation, and, mounting his horse, he rode to Saumur, there to make his preparations for continuing the war.

Effigy of Eleanor, Queen of Henry II. From the Tomb at Fontevrault.

At the news of this new rupture, the Bretons, who had been quiet for two years, rose once more in revolt, and the men of Poitou declared for Richard so soon as they perceived him to be finally separated from his father. Many of the nobles and knights of Henry began to desert him, as they had done before, and the party of his son, supported by the king of France, increased in strength daily. On the other hand, the greater part of the Normans remained faithful to their sovereign, and the pope granted Henry his assistance, causing sentence of excommunication to be declared against all the adherents of the rebellious son. But Henry was no longer young. The repeated vexations and misfortunes he had undergone—the wounds he had received from the disobedience of his children—at length produced their effect, and he resigned himself to sorrow, leaving to the legate of the pope and to the priests the care of his defence. They sent repeated messages to Richard and to the king of France, whom they threatened with excommunication, and, at length, Philip was induced to consent to another conference, at which peace was to be arranged.

At this meeting, which took place in the year 1189, there were present, besides the two kings, Richard, John of Anagni, the cardinal legate of the pope, and the archbishops of Canterbury, Rheims, Bourges, and Rouen. Philip proposed the same conditions as before, and Henry again rejected them but offered to marry Alice to John, the only one of his sons who had remained obedient to him, proposing, at the same time, to make John heir to the continental dominions of the English crown. Richard indignantly refused these terms, and the king of France having supported him in this opposition, John of Anagni declared that his mission was to place the whole of the territories of Philip under an interdict. The young king boldly defied the legate, and Richard even drew his sword against the pope's envoy, and would have killed him on the spot but for the interposition of those who surrounded him.

Henry was compelled to relinquish these unavailing negotiations, and to summon his troops to take the field. The French king attacked his territories in Anjou, while the Poitevins and Bretons, headed by Richard, seized the royal towns and castles in the south. The old king, whom grief and failing health had reft of all his former energy, was compelled once more to sue for peace, and offered to grant whatever terms might be demanded. Philip and Henry met, for the last time, in a plain between Tours and Azay-sur-Cher, Richard remaining at a distance, waiting the result of the interview. Philip demanded that the English king should give in his allegiance to him, and place himself at his mercy; that Alice should be committed to the care of persons appointed by Richard, until his return from the Holy Land, whither he intended to proceed immediately; that Henry should give his son the kiss of peace, in token of entire forgiveness of the past; and should pay to the king of France twenty thousand marks of silver, for the restitution of the provinces which he had conquered.

According to a contemporary historian, the two kings were talking together in the open field, when suddenly, although the sky was without a cloud, a loud clap of thunder was heard overhead, and a flash of lightning descended between them.* They immediately separated in affright, and when, after a short interval, they met again, a second clap, louder than the first, was heard almost on the instant. The conference was broken off, and Henry, whose weak state of health rendered him liable to be seriously affected by any violent emotion, retired to his quarters, where the articles of the treaty reduced to writing were sent to him. Thus the historian would have us believe that Heaven itself interposed to prevent the dishonour of the English king, and his submission to the crown of France.

The envoys of Philip found the old king in bed, and while he lay there they began to read out to him the articles of the treaty. When they came to the part which referred to the persons engaged secretly or avowedly in the cause of Richard, the king desired to know their names, that he might at least learn who they were who had been his enemies. The first name read to him was that of his youngest son John, whom he had so long believed to be loyal and dutiful. On hearing this name, the old man was seized with a violent agitation or convulsion of the whole frame. Raising himself half up, he exclaimed, "Is it then true that John, the joy of my heart, the son of my love, he whom I have cherished more than all the rest, and for love of whom I have brought upon myself these troubles, has also deserted me?" Then falling back on the bed, and turning his face to the wall, he said, in words of despair, "So be it, then; let everything go as it will; I care no more for myself, nor for the world."

Feeling that he grew rapidly worse, Henry caused himself to be conveyed to Chinon, where he arrived in a dying state. In his last moments he was heard to utter maledictions on himself as a conquered king, and to curse

* Roger of Hovedon.

also the sons he was leaving behind him. The bishops and lords who surrounded him exerted themselves in vain to induce him to retract these words, and he continued repeating them until death laid its finger on his lips.

Richard Cœur de Lion drawing his Sword upon the Cardinal-Legate of the Pope.

No sooner had this great king breathed his last, than his servants and attendants, one and all, deserted his corpse, as had happened a century before to that of his ancestor, William the Conqueror. It is related that these hirelings stripped the body of their royal master of the very clothes which covered him, and carried off everything of value from the chamber. King Henry had desired to be buried at the abbey of Fontevrault, a few leagues to the south of Chinon; but it was not until after considerable delay that people could be

found to wrap the body in a shroud, and convey it thither with horses. The corpse was lying in the great church of the abbey, waiting the time of sepulture, when Richard, bore upon them the impress of prolonged agony. The son gazed upon the sight in silence, and with a sudden impulse, he knelt down for a few moments before the altar;

Richard Cœur-de-Lion beside the Dead Body of his Father.

who had received the news of his father's death, arrived at Fontevrault. Entering the church, he commanded the face of the dead king to be uncovered, that he might look upon it for the last time. The features were still contracted, and then, rising up, he quitted the church, not to return. An old superstition of Scandinavia, which had descended alike to Normans and Saxons, was to the effect that the body of a murdered man would bleed in the presence of the

murderer; and some of the chronicles relate that from the moment when Richard entered the church, until he had again passed the threshold, blood flowed without ceasing from the nostrils of the dead king. Thus it is evident that contemporary writers regarded the conduct of the sons as having accelerated, if not caused, the death of their father.

Henry II. died on the 6th of July, A.D. 1189, at the age of fifty-six, having reigned nearly thirty-five years. Of the king's personal character, very different estimates have been formed by different historians. Those who look at a many-sided character from their own narrow stand-point, will, necessarily, paint that side only which is presented to them, leaving the rest in shadow; and thus we find Henry II. described on the one hand as a man almost without blemish, and, on the other, as utterly destitute of public or private virtue. It appears probable that he had little abstract regard for the welfare of the people, but he was fully alive to his own interests, and he perceived those interests to be bound up in the national prosperity. He therefore laboured to promote the well-being of his subjects, as absolute monarchs, in later times, have done from a similar motive. He was inordinately ambitious, and was heard to say, in moments of triumph, that the whole world was a portion little enough for a great man. He was skilled in the arts of diplomacy, and accustomed to use dissimulation and falsehood whenever an advantage was to be gained thereby.

Instances have been given of the ungovernable fits of passion to which Henry in his younger days was subject; these appear to have been much less frequent as he grew past middle age. Without any self-control in moments of anger, he was at other times remarkable for acting with calm judgment and calculation. In his relations with women he was extremely licentious. Among his mistresses was one who has been celebrated in various romantic tales, most of which are without any foundation in truth. "Fair Rosamond" was the daughter of Walter Clifford, a baron of Hertfordshire, whose castle was situated on one of the heights overlooking the valley of the Wye, between the Welsh Hay and Hereford. Henry fell in love with her before he ascended the throne, and she bore to him two sons, who have been already mentioned as aiding their father at the time of the partial rebellion in England. One of these was William, called Longsword, from the size of the weapon which he carried, who married the daughter of the earl of Salisbury, and succeeded to his estates; the other was Geoffrey, bishop of Lincoln, and subsequently archbishop of York. While Henry was still a young man, Rosamond retired to the convent of Godestow, near to Oxford, where, after a few years, she died. During her residence there, Henry bestowed many valuable presents upon the convent for her sake, and the nuns, who seem to have been actuated by a personal regard for her, as well as by a recollection of the benefits she had conferred upon them, buried her in their choir, burning tapers round her tomb, and showing to her remains other marks of honour. Henry, bishop of Lincoln, disapproved of these proceedings, and gave the nuns to understand that one who had led an impure life, even though the mistress of a king, was not worthy to lie in the sacred edifice. The repentance of Rosamond, which appears to have been sincere, was not permitted to wipe away the shame of the past, and her body was removed and buried in the common cemetery. The nuns, however, feared no contamination from the poor remains of their frail sister, and they secretly collected her bones, strewed perfumes over them, and buried them once more in the church. The story of the bower of Rosamond, and of the poisoned bowl forced upon her by the jealousy of Eleanor, cannot be traced to any contemporary source, and must be rejected as devoid of truth.

Whatever may be the view we take of the character of Henry as a man, there can be no doubt that, as a king, he deserves a high place in English history. In the stormy times of the middle ages, better were the wrongs inflicted by an ambitious monarch, than the national corruption and decay which attended the reign of a weak one. Under the rule of Henry Plantagenet, the country made rapid strides in power and influence, and reached that high position among the nations of Europe, which it was destined to maintain in later times.

CHAPTER XLV.

Norman Architecture.

EDWARD the Confessor, who was more a Norman than a Saxon, and more a churchman than a king, had been brought up at the Norman court; and, having had his ideas and tastes formed there, on his accession to the English throne introduced the Norman fashions and manners, filled his court with Norman ecclesiastics, and adopted the Norman style of architecture for his ecclesiastical buildings. Shortly before his death he built the abbey church of Westminster, which is described by William of Malmesbury* as being constructed in a "new style," and he also says that it served for a model for many subsequent buildings. This edifice, which has long since disappeared, was doubtless in the style he had imported from abroad, and, though built by a Saxon monarch, was, there can be no doubt, a genuine Norman building. Numerous churches and monasteries, founded on this model, are said to have sprung up in towns and villages in all directions, and thus we see that the Norman style was established even before the Norman Conquest. That great event confirmed the changes which the Confessor had begun, and the rude Saxon churches were swept away and replaced by the more finished Norman.

The Normans were essentially a building people, and no building seems to have been good enough for them, if they had the means of erecting a better. Hence we see a continued change—a constant pulling down and rebuilding on a larger scale; and to this must be ascribed the disappearance of the buildings which had been erected before the Conquest. It is chiefly in remote places, which were too poor to enlarge their churches, that we still find remains of the original Saxon work. In many of the smaller churches, which were erected soon after the Conquest, the Saxon ideas still linger; the towers have the same proportions, and the same general appearance prevails, but the workmanship is better; the balustre disappears, and is replaced by a shaft, and the capitals assume more of the Norman

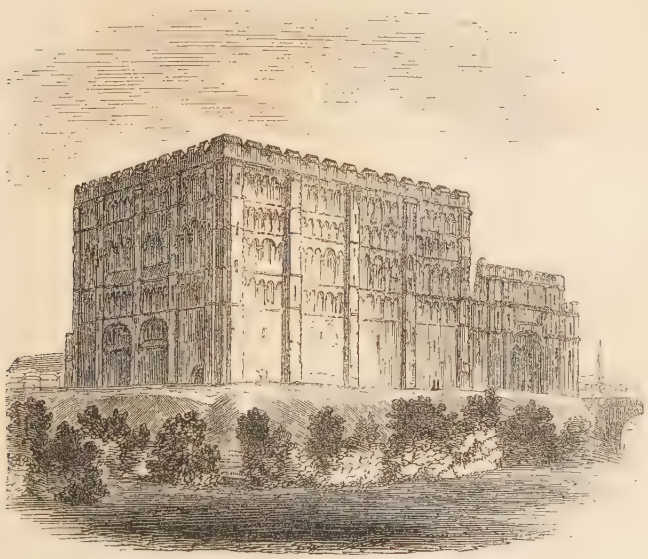
* His words are: "King Edward the Confessor commanded the church at Westminster to be dedicated on Innocents' day. He was buried on the day of the Epiphany, in the said church, which he first in England had erected after that kind of style, which almost all attempt to rival, at enormous expense."

form. This lingering love for the old forms was, doubtless, owing to the necessary employment of Saxon workmen, who naturally still clung to their national style; but in large buildings, where foreign architects and workmen would be employed, the new style would be exhibited in its purity.

Canterbury, St. Albans, Rochester, and Ely were built in the reign of the Conqueror, but of these Canterbury is the most interesting, as it so fully illustrates the history of architecture in this kingdom. There was a Saxon cathedral on the spot at the time of the Conquest, but, having been destroyed by fire, it was rebuilt on an enlarged scale by the Norman archbishop, Lanfranc, in 1070; but, within about twenty years, this church was pulled down by his successor, as not being large enough, and another erected on a more magnificent scale. This was again partially destroyed by fire, and was again rebuilt in 1175, and the following years. The history of the fire, and the subsequent re-building, has been minutely given by Gervase, a monk of Canterbury, who was an eye-witness of the whole; and his account is peculiarly valuable, as it enables us to compare the style of the remains of the old building with that erected under his own eyes; and we are by this means enabled to point out the differences between the early and the late Norman buildings. His narrative is clear and interesting, and his description of the present building wonderfully correct.

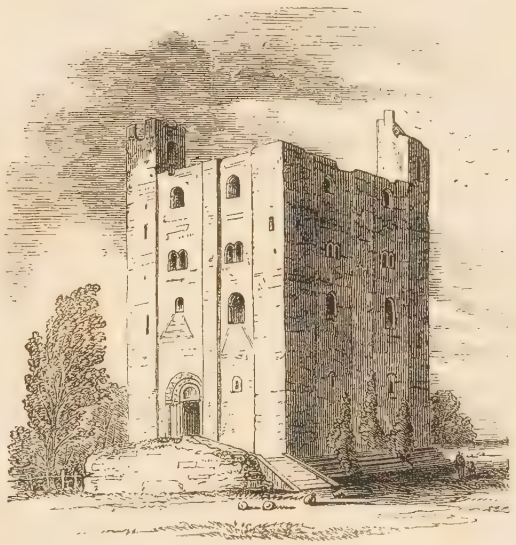
St. Albans' abbey was built in the reign of the Conqueror, and in the construction of the building the materials of the Roman city of Verulam were freely used, so that a great part of it is built of Roman bricks.

The following cathedrals also were built in the Norman period, and still retain portions of the original work:—Lincoln, Rochester, Ely, Worcester, Gloucester, Durham, Norwich, Winchester, Peterborough, and Oxford. Castles were erected in various parts of the kingdom, to restrain the rebellious people, who could ill brook the



1.—Norwich Castle.

tyranny of the Conqueror. Of these the Tower of London is one of the most important, and the chapel in the "White Tower" is one of the best examples (dated 1081) we possess of early Norman, though, from its situation in a military building, it has less of ornament than might otherwise have been expected. Of Norman castles, the chief parts which remain are the keeps or principal towers, and these have in general one prevailing character. They are square masses, not having much height in proportion to their breadth, and merely relieved at the angles by slightly projecting turrets. The windows are in general comparatively small, and the walls exceedingly thick—sometimes, as at Carlisle, reaching to sixteen feet Norwich (1), from its immense size, is an excellent example of this kind of tower, and Castle Headingham (2) is another.



2.—Hedingham Castle, Essex.

Of the houses of this period many yet exist, though not in an entire state; and of these some fine specimens are found in Lincoln,* where they are said to have belonged to the Jews, but whose riches at that time only led to their destruction.

Many rich and magnificent examples of monastic buildings of this date occur in various parts of the kingdom.

Norman architecture may be divided into three periods — viz., Early, Middle, or fully-developed, and Transition; the first extending from the Conquest, or a few years previous, to the end of the reign of Henry I., 1135; the second from the commencement of Stephen to nearly the end of Henry II., 1180; after which date the Transition commences, and the style gradually loses its characteristics until it merges in the succeeding, or Early English style of the thirteenth century. Of the first period, the chapel in the Tower of London has been already mentioned as an example; the second includes most of our rich Norman buildings; and of the third the Temple Church is a good specimen.

The great characteristics of Norman architecture are solidity and strength. Walls of an enormous thickness, huge masses of masonry for piers, windows comparatively small, and a profusion of peculiar ornament, seem to be essential to the full development of the style; and there is

* See Hudson Turner's "Domestic Architecture."

a gloomy magnificence in a fine Norman building which is highly impressive; its walls seem as firmly fixed in the earth as the iron foot of the Conqueror was on the neck of a prostrate nation.

The characteristics of Norman architecture are as follows:—

Towers.—These are in general rather low for their breadth. They are more massive than the Saxon ones which preceded them, and this is particularly the case with the later buildings. Many of the church towers which were built soon after the Conquest have very much of the Saxon character remaining, and are proportionably taller than those of later date, but the workmanship is better. A large belfry window, divided by a shaft, in the upper story, is a common feature; and the surface of the tower is frequently ornamented with stages of intersecting or plain arcades, and sometimes the whole surface is covered with ornament. The angles of the tower are strengthened by flat buttresses having but little projection, which sometimes reach to the top of the building, and sometimes only to the first or second story. The parapets of most Norman towers are destroyed, and it is consequently difficult to say what they were originally; but it seems probable that the towers terminated in a pointed roof. Staircases were of common occurrence, and are frequently made very ornamental features.

Windows.—These are universally round-headed, except in the transition period. The simplest form is a narrow round-headed opening, with a plain dripstone, but they are frequently wider and divided into two lights by a shaft, and richly ornamented with the zigzag and other mouldings.

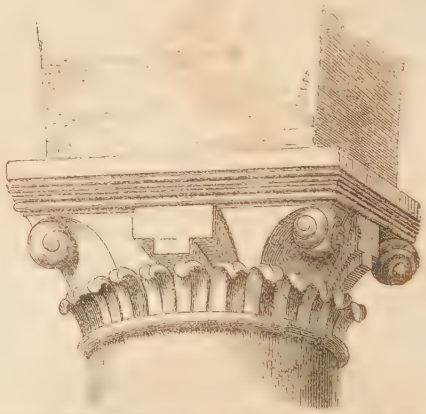
Doorways.—These are the features on which the most elaborate workmanship was bestowed by the Norman architects, and it is perhaps to be attributed to this, that so many of them have been preserved; the Norman doorway having frequently been retained when the church was rebuilt. They are always, except in the transition period, semicircular, and are very deeply moulded. They are frequently three or four times recessed, and are richly ornamented with the peculiar decorations of the style, the most characteristic of which is the zigzag or chevron moulding. A peculiar head having a bird's beak, and called a "beak-head," is frequently used, and medallions of the signs of the zodiac are not uncommon. The jambs of the door are ornamented with shafts which are sometimes richly ornamented, and have elaborately sculptured capitals. The doorway itself is frequently square-headed, and the tympanum or space between this and the arch is filled with sculpture representing the Trinity, the Saviour, saints, or some symbolical design or monstrous animal, and sometimes merely foliage. There are a few doorways which are trefoil-headed instead of circular.

Porches.—The Norman porch is in general little more than a doorway, the little projection it has from the wall being intended chiefly to give greater depth to the doorway, which is very deeply recessed, and it is in these porches that we find the richest doorways, the arches and shafts being overlaid with the utmost profusion of ornament, which, though sometimes rude, always produces a fine effect, and there is scarcely any architectural feature which is so universally admired; other styles may be more chaste and more finished, but there is a grandeur about a rich Norman doorway which is peculiarly its own.

Arches.—The semicircular is the characteristic form of the Norman arch, but there are a few early examples in which the pointed arch was used, supported by massive piers; they are not likely to be mistaken for those of the next style. In the transition the pointed arch is very frequently used. Sometimes the arch is brought in a little at the impost, when it is called a horse-shoe arch; and sometimes the spring of the arch is above the impost, and is carried down by straight lines. They are then said to be *stilted*.

Piers and Pillars.—The piers in early buildings were very massive, consisting frequently merely of heavy square masses of masonry with nothing but the impost moulding to relieve their plainness. Sometimes they were recessed at the angles, and sometimes they were circular, with capitals and bases, but still of very large diameter. As the style advanced they were reduced in thickness and had richly sculptured capitals and bases, frequently ornamented with sculpture at the angles. In the transition period the pillars became slender and clustered, with little to distinguish them from the next style. The Galilee, at Durham, is an excellent example of late Norman; the round arch and the zigzag mouldings are still retained, but the pillars are as slender as those of the early English.

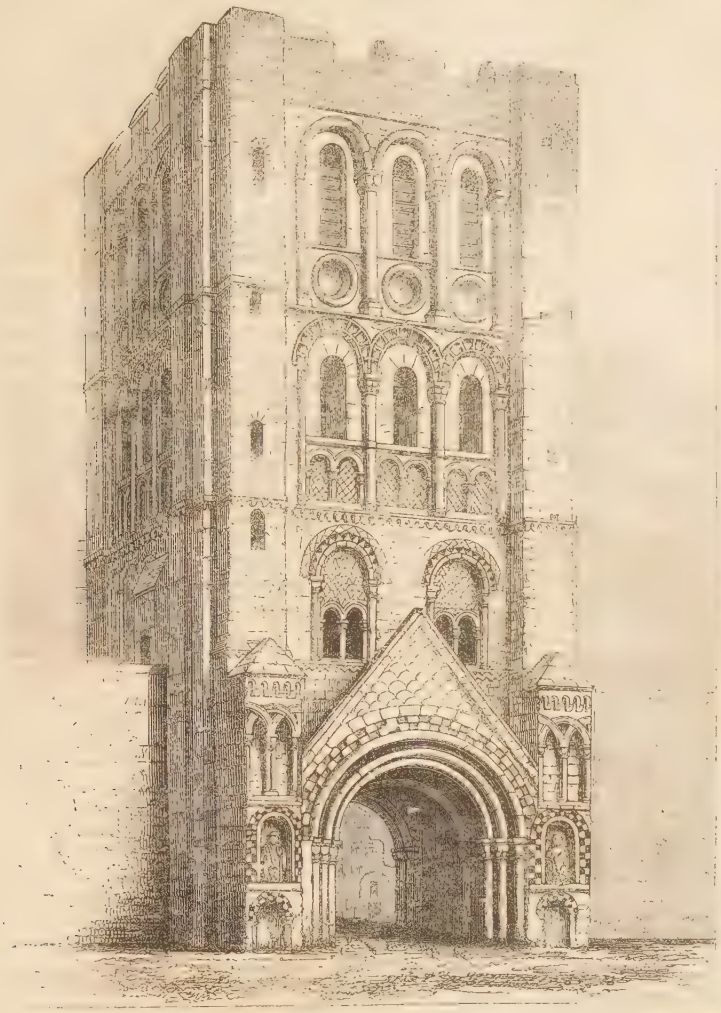
Capitals.—The capital is the member by which the styles are more easily distinguished than by any other. In the Saxon style we have seen that the Corinthian capital was rudely imitated; and we find in the early Norman this imitation continued, but with more resemblance to the



3.—Early Norman Capital, from the Tower of London.

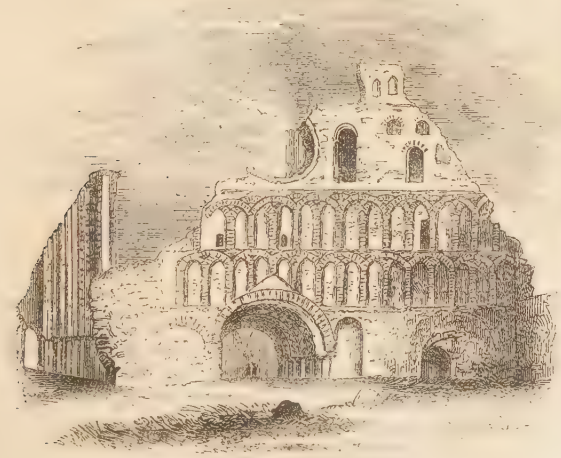
original, as will be better shown when we come to describe the specimen from the White Tower (3), and this imitation was more and more complete as the style advanced.

The general form of the plain capital is that of a hemisphere cut into four plain faces; this form is called a cushion capital. This may be considered as the fundamental form from which other varieties are worked. It is sometimes doubled or multiplied, and sometimes highly ornamented, as in the examples from Durham, where they are so overlaid with ornament that it is difficult to distinguish the original form. The abacus, or upper member of the capital, will at once distinguish the Norman from all other styles, and throughout Gothic architecture it is the feature most to be depended on in distinguishing one style from another. In the Norman it is square in section, with the corner edge sloped or chamfered off. It is com-



4.—St. James's Tower, Bury St. Edmunds.

monly quite plain, but sometimes it is moulded, and sometimes highly ornamented, as in the example from Durham (6); but in all cases it retains its primitive and distinctive form.



5.—St. Botolph's Priory.

Mouldings and Ornaments.—These are extremely numerous; the ornamented mouldings are almost endless in variety, but the most general is the zigzag, which is used for decoration in all places, both simple and in every variety of combination, sparingly in the early buildings, but profusely in the later ones. The billet is much used in early work, as is also a peculiar kind of shallow lozenge, and other ornaments, which required little skill in the execution.

Where large and otherwise blank spaces of walls, either on fronts or towers, have to be relieved, it is frequently done by introducing stages of intersecting arcades, —a fine example of which occurs at St. Botolph's Priory, Essex (5).

There is a peculiar kind of ornament which is used to relieve surfaces of blank spaces, either over the arches or the interior or in the heads of window-porches, &c. This is frequently called *diaper work*, and consists either of lines cut in the stone in the form of a trellis, or in imitation of scale-work, arches, &c., as on the tower here engraved.

Description of the Illustrations.—*St. James Tower, Bury St. Edmunds* (4).—This is given as an example of an early Norman tower, and as elucidating several of the peculiarities in the preceding remarks. It exhibits the flat, pilaster-like buttresses, so

6.—Portion of a Doorway, Durham Cathedral.

characteristic of Norman work. Secondly, a porch flanked by two pedimented buttresses, ornamented with corbel-tables and intersecting arcades. The arch is plainer than it would have been at a later period, but it exhibits the billet moulding which is also used on the buttresses. The capitals are of the plain cushion form, and the pediment of the porch exhibits the scalework surface ornament already mentioned. Other varieties of this ornament also occur in the heads of the lower windows, and in the arcade in the middle story. The zigzag in this example is only used for a string course.

Capital from the Chapel in the Tower of London is given as a very good example of the Early Norman form of capital. It exhibits the volutes at the angles and the plain block in the centre, in room of the caulicoli, and is surrounded by a peculiar stiff kind of foliage, the whole being an evident but rude imitation of the Corinthian capital. The volutes and the centre block are common features of early Norman capitals, but the foliage is rare. It occurs also in the work of Remigius, at Lincoln cathedral.

Portion of Doorway, Durham Cathedral, is given as an example of rich Norman, and exhibits the peculiar mouldings and ornaments of the style. The dripstone shows a rude kind of foliage, on which are placed at intervals medallions containing animals, &c. It is not unusual for these to be occupied with the signs of the zodiac. The arch exhibits a rich series of zigzags; the abacus of the capitals is of the usual Norman form, but has its upright face ornamented with what is an evident imitation of a classical form, generally known as the Grecian honeysuckle. The capitals are of the usual cushion shape, but overlaid with foliage and monstrous animals. The shapes exhibit two varieties of ornamentation, much used in very rich doorways. The first two are fluted spirally in opposite directions, and the third exhibits a kind of diaper work, being a modification of the zigzag, in which the interstices are filled with foliage.

Richard Cœur-de-Lion.

CHAPTER XLVI.

Accession of Richard I., surnamed Cœur-de-Lion, A.D. 1189—Massacre of the Jews—The Third Crusade.

No sooner had the monks of Fontevrault committed the body of Henry to the grave, than Richard assumed the sovereign authority, and his first acts were marked with all that energy and determination which afterwards distinguished him. He at once gave orders that the person of Stephen of Tours, seneschal of Anjou, and treasurer of Henry, should be seized. This functionary was thrown into a dungeon, where he was confined with irons on his feet and hands, until he had given up to the new king, not

only all the treasures of the crown, but also his own property. Richard then called to his councils the advisers of his father, and discarded all those men who had supported his own rebellion, not excepting even his most familiar friends. This policy, which has been attributed by some historians to the repentance of Richard, was more probably the result of profound calculation, and was based upon sound reasoning. The men who were ready to plot against one monarch, would not hesitate to do the same towards another, when occasion served, or offence was given; while those who had supported the reigning dynasty were the men upon whom the new king might most safely depend.

Messengers were immediately sent to England, commanding the release of the Queen Eleanor. On quitting her prison she was temporarily invested with the office of regent, and during the short period of authority which she thus obtained, she occupied herself in works of mercy and benevolence. The long imprisonment she had undergone appeared to have softened her imperious temper; she listened readily to those who had complaints to lay before her, and pardoned many offenders against the crown. Having proceeded to Winchester, where she took possession of the royal treasures, she summoned a great assembly of the barons and ecclesiastics of the country to receive the new monarch and tender him their allegiance. After a delay of two months, Richard crossed the channel, accompanied by his brother John, and landed at Portsmouth. On his arrival at Winchester he caused the gold and jewels of the crown to be weighed in his presence, and an inventory made of

Massacre of the Jews at the Coronation of Richard I.

them. A similar course was pursued in the cities in which treasures of the late king had been deposited. Richard was absorbed in the project of a grand expedition to the Holy Land, which should reduce the infidel to permanent submission, and place himself on the highest pinnacle of military renown. To this circumstance we may in some degree attribute it that the ambitious John permitted his brother to succeed to the throne without any attempt to dispute his right. John probably calculated that in the king's absence the actual sovereignty would devolve upon himself, and that the impetuous Richard might never return from the dangers of the holy war. Apart from these considerations, however, it is doubtful whether the weak temper of John would have permitted him to rebel openly against his powerful and energetic brother.

On the 3rd of September, Richard was crowned at Westminster, and the ceremonial was conducted with great pomp and splendour. The procession along the aisles of the cathedral was headed by the earl of Albemarle, who carried the crown. Over the head of Richard was a silken canopy, supported by four lances, each of which was held by one of the great barons of the kingdom. The bishops of Bath and Durham walked beside the king, whose path to the altar was spread with a rich carpet of Tyrian purple. The ceremony was performed by Baldwin, archbishop of Canterbury, and Richard took the customary oath to fear God and execute justice. The cloak, or upper clothing, of the king was then taken off, sandals of gold were placed upon his feet, and he was anointed with oil upon the head, breast, and shoulders; afterwards receiving the insignia of his rank from the state officers in attendance. Richard was then led to the altar, where he renewed the vows he had taken; and, lifting with his own hands the crown

Crown of the 12th century. From the Tomb of Richard, at Fontevrault.

from off the altar,—which he did in token that he received it from God alone,—he gave it to the archbishop, who placed it upon his head.

The day of the new king's coronation was marked by an event which resulted in an attack upon all the Jews assembled in the city, who were barbarously murdered with their wives and children. In the middle ages, while the science of finance was in its infancy, and men had not yet learned to associate together for purposes of trade, the Jews were the principal, if not the only, bankers of Christendom. There were no laws in existence to regulate the interest of money, and their profits were frequently enormous. The wealth which they thus obtained, no less than the obnoxious faith to which they firmly adhered, caused them to become objects of hatred to the people, and this feeling was increased at the date of the new crusade, in consequence of the increased rate of interest they demanded from men who were about to risk their lives in that dangerous journey. During the reign of Henry II. the Jews had enjoyed some degree of protection, and had, accordingly, increased in numbers and wealth. In France they were less fortunate. On the accession of Philip II. he had issued an edict ordering the banishment of all the Jews from the kingdom, and the confiscation of their property. Hated by the people, the persecuted race had no other hope than in the favour of the prince, and, fearing that Richard might be disposed to follow the example of his ally, the king of France, they determined to secure his protection by presents of great value.

At the coronation of Richard, the chief men of the Jewish race proceeded to Westminster to lay their offerings at his feet. Being apprised of their intention, Richard, who is said to have feared some evil influence* from their presence, issued a proclamation, forbidding Jews and women to be present at Westminster on that day, either in the church, where he was to receive the crown, or in the hall, where he was to take dinner. Some of the Jews, however, trusting that the object of their errand would excuse the breach of the royal command, attempted to enter the church among the crowd, and were attacked and beaten by the king's servants. A report was then rapidly circulated among the multitude outside, that the king had delivered up the unbelievers to the vengeance of the people. Headed by some of the lower class of knights and nobles, who were not sorry to get rid of men to whom they owed large sums of money, the crowd surrounded the unhappy Jews, and drove them along the streets with staves and stones, killing many of them before they could reach the doors of their houses. At night the excitement spread throughout the town, and the populace attacked the dwellings of the hated race in every direction. These being strongly barricaded from within, were set on fire by the mob, and all the inmates who were not destroyed in the flames, and who attempted to escape by the doors, were received on the swords of their adversaries.

Statue of Richard I. in the choir of York Cathedral.

At the commencement of the riot, the king made some attempt to appease it, by sending the justiciary of the kingdom, Ranulph de Glanville, with other officers, to interpose their authority. They, however, were compelled to fly for their lives, and returned to the king, who seems to have had little real concern about the matter. While the work of carnage was proceeding, he remained seated at the banquet, and he afterwards took no steps to punish the murderers. He, however, issued a proclamation, in which he declared the Jews to be under the protection of the crown, and forbade any man to molest or plunder them.

* It was a common belief among the people of this superstitious age, that the Jews were guilty of the practice of sorcery.

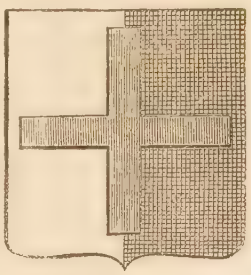
Allusion has already been made to the expedition known as the Second Crusade, which was headed by Louis VII. of France, and the emperor Conrad of Germany. Although 200,000 persons perished in this crusade, it is by no means to be ranked in importance with those which preceded and followed it. Although preached with all the zeal of the celebrated St. Bernard, abbot of Clairvaux, who was noted equally for eloquence and piety, its acceptance was confined to France and Germany, and it took the character of a great military expedition rather than of a popular movement. The result of the expedition was disastrous, and the princes returned to England with only the scattered remnant of their noble army. The events of this crusade being in themselves comparatively unimportant, and having only an indirect connection with English history, it has not been considered necessary to relate them in detail. The state of affairs in the East, which induced the kings of France and England to determine upon a third crusade, was referred to in the last chapter.

To raise money for the expedition to Palestine, Richard adopted a policy similar to that which, in the reign of Stephen, had so greatly reduced the revenues of the state. He publicly sold the estates of the crown to the highest bidder—towns, castles, and domains. Many rich Normans of low birth thus became possessed of lands which, at the time of the Conquest, had been distributed among the immediate followers of William; and many men of Saxon race availed themselves of the opportunity to recover the houses of their fathers, and, under a quit rent, became the lawful owners of their places of abode. The towns which concluded these bargains became corporations, and were organised under a municipal government. In the reigns of Richard I. and his successors many of these conventions took place, by which the cities of England gradually redeemed themselves from the condition into which they had fallen at the Norman Conquest.* In these transactions Richard appears to have been influenced solely by his determination to obtain money, and when some of his courtiers ventured to remonstrate with him, he said that he would sell London itself, if he could find a buyer.†

Titles and offices of state were also sold without scruple. Hugh Pudsey, bishop of Durham, purchased the earldom of Northumberland, and also obtained, for a payment of 1,000 marks, the chief justiciarship of the kingdom. It has been already related that, at the time of Richard's accession, this office was held by Ranulph de Glanville, a man of great ability and undoubted probity. One account tells us that Glanville resigned the office for the purpose of joining the crusade; but other historians relate that he was driven from it by the king, who was willing to obtain money even by the disgrace of an old and valuable servant of the crown. Vacant ecclesiastical benefices were filled up by the appointment of those who could best afford to pay for them. In addition to the sums raised by these measures, Richard obtained 20,000 marks from the king of Scotland, who in return was released from the obligation of servitude to the English crown.

While Richard thus appeared to be making every preparation for the expedition to the Holy Land, he showed no hurry to leave his new kingdom, and Philip of France, with whom he had engaged to join his forces, sent ambassadors to England to announce his intention to depart at the ensuing Easter. Richard then convoked an assembly of the nobles of the kingdom, and declared his intention to proceed to the Holy Land in company with his brother of France. He placed the regency in the hands of William Longchamp, bishop of Ely, and Hugh Pudsey, bishop of Durham; the former of whom succeeded, not long afterwards, in securing the entire authority into his own hands. Prince John was thus deprived of the position which he had calculated would fall to him, and he received by way of compensation a pension of 4,000 marks, the territory of Mortaigne in Normandy, and the earldoms of Derby, Nottingham, Gloucester, Somerset, and Lancaster in England. These estates comprised a third part of the kingdom.

Early in the following year (1190) Richard crossed the channel into Normandy, and soon afterwards a meeting took place between the two kings of France and England, at which they bound themselves to a compact of brotherhood and alliance, each swearing to maintain the life and honour of the other as he would his own. The death of the young queen of France caused a delay in the departure of the expedition, and it was not until midsummer that the armies of the two kings assembled for that purpose. The allied forces are said to have numbered 100,000, and having been united on the plains of Vezelai, they marched in company to Lyons. At this point the two kings separated. Philip, who possessed no fleet or seaport town on the Mediterranean, proceeded by land to Genoa, that powerful republic having agreed to furnish a fleet of transports for the convoy of his troops. Richard was in possession of the powerful fleet built by his father for the voyage to Palestine, as well as of trading vessels which he had himself selected from different seaports, and he, therefore, had no need to make the journey across the Alps. He proceeded from Lyons to Marseilles, where he proposed to embark.



Shield of a Templar.

The fleet, however, had not arrived when the king reached the coast. On leaving England the ships were placed under the care of two bishops and three knights, who received the title of constables. In crossing the bay of Biscay they encountered a violent storm, which caused them considerable damage, and at length compelled them to put into the Tagus, where they arrived successively. The king of Portugal was then at war with the Moors, and having obtained the assistance of a body of the Crusaders, he compelled the enemy to retreat. The king, however, soon had reason to dread the presence of his friends almost as much as that of his enemies. The soldiers of the fleet landed at Lisbon, where they indulged in their customary manner, in plunder and licentiousness. The inhabitants took up arms for the defence of their wives and property, and various encounters, attended with bloodshed, occurred between them and the Crusaders. Sancho, the reigning king, then closed the gates of the town, and made prisoners such of the Crusaders as were within the walls. The English retaliated by seizing any of the Portuguese who came in their way. An agreement was then entered

* Hallam's "History of the Middle Ages." † Guil. Neubrig.

into, by which hostilities were suspended, the prisoners were released, and the Crusaders set sail from Lisbon. The fleet which now numbered more than one hundred sail arrived in four weeks at Marseilles, whither it proceeded to Messina.

Meanwhile Richard, whose impetuous nature could ill endure delay, had hired a number of vessels at Marseilles,

View of part of the Town of Genoa. From an ancient Engraving.

in which he embarked a body of his troops; and, after visiting Genoa, where he met the king of France, he arrived at Naples. It would appear that Cœur-de-Lion was at this time not without some sort of religious feeling, since it is recorded that, during his stay at Naples, he paid a voluntary act of devotion to the patron saint of that city. Having visited the sanctuary of St. Januarius, he entered a crypt, and told his orisons, surrounded by the bodies of the dead, which were arranged in niches around the walls. These ghastly figures, dry and shrivelled, were arrayed in their usual dresses, and, in the deep gloom of the crypt, appeared as if they were alive.

After having made an excursion through the surrounding neighbourhood, Richard arrived on the shore of the narrow strait which divides Sicily from Calabria, whence he was conveyed to the harbour of Messina. The French king had already arrived, and soon afterwards set sail with the view of continuing his voyage to the East. His ships, however, experienced bad weather, which compelled them to return to the port, and the two kings then arranged to remain there during the winter.

The island of Sicily, which in the preceding century had been conquered by the Norman lords of Apulia and Calabria, then formed, together with a part of lower Italy, a kingdom which was under the control of the Holy See. Not many years before, under the reign of William I., the country had been in a prosperous condition, but now it was weakened

Medals of William I. or William II. of Sicily.

by internal dissensions and in no position to offer a successful defence to attacks from without. William II., surnamed the Good, had married Richard's sister Joan, who bore to him no children. Anxious to preserve the succession to his family, he caused his aunt, the princess Constance, who was the only legitimate member of the family, to be married to Henry, son and heir of the emperor Frederic Barbarossa. By securing to her a powerful husband, able to support her claims, the king trusted to overcome that opposition to a female sovereign which was likely to be even greater in Sicily than in other countries of Europe. Constance, at the age of thirty-two, was considerably older than her husband; but her dower was rich, and this, joined to the prospect of the succession, proved attraction sufficient for the young prince. He married her in the year 1186, at Milan. In November, 1189, William the Good died, appointing by his will that his aunt Constance should be his successor. The barons of the kingdom had previously taken an oath of fealty to the princess, but that oath, as well as the will of the king, was entirely disregarded. The nobles were necessarily indisposed to submit to the rule of a foreign prince, and the aggressions of the German emperors in the north of Italy, had given good cause for dread of any further increase of their power. Constance and Henry were also out of the country at this critical moment, and the barons, after various disputes among themselves, conferred the crown upon Tancred, Count of Lecce, cousin to William the Good, though reputed to be of illegitimate birth. The new king was hailed by the people with acclamation, and was acknowledged by the pope, Clement III., who sent him the customary benediction. His reign, however, had no sooner commenced, than various conspiracies were formed against him by the barons who had been competitors for the throne, and though he had succeeded in reducing these to submission, he was threatened by Henry, who had now become emperor, and who was preparing a powerful army to support the claims of his wife Constance.

Such was the position of affairs in Sicily at the time of the arrival of the kings of England and France. Both monarchs were received by Tancred with every token of honour and hospitality; Philip was entertained within the walls of the city, and Richard took up his quarters in a house without the walls, situated in the midst of a vineyard. On one occasion, when Richard was making an excursion in the neighbourhood of Messina, attended by a single knight, he passed through a village, in which he saw a

hawk standing before a cottager's door. According to the laws of the European kings, it was forbidden to yeomen and townspeople to keep that noble bird, which was considered the exclusive property of the great. Richard, with his accustomed carelessness of consequences, took up the poor man's hawk, and carried it away on his wrist. The Sicilian peasant, though under the rule of a Norman conqueror, had not yet learned submission to such treatment as this. Joined by some of his friends, he followed the king, and drawing his knife, attacked him. Richard drew his sword, and for a while he kept the peasants at bay; but the sword broke in his hand, and he was compelled to take to flight. The enraged villagers pursued him closely with sticks and stones, and probably the life of Cœur de Lion was saved by his reaching the gates of a priory, in which he took shelter.

Falcons.

Falco sacer. *Falco palumbarius.* *Falco nisus.*

After having remained for a very brief period in tranquillity, Richard found in the position of his sister Joan a cause of quarrel with the king of Sicily. At the time of the marriage of that princess with William the Good, a splendid dower had been given to her by her husband, including many towns and cities, and territory of considerable extent. When Tancred ascended the throne, he withheld these broad lands, part of which, however, were occupied by nobles who were in rebellion, and which, therefore, it would not have been easy to deliver up. Richard first demanded that his sister should be sent to him, and when the request was complied with, he sent other messengers requiring the whole of her dower. Without waiting for an answer, the impetuous prince passed over to the Calabrian shore, and seized possession of the castle of Bagnara. Here he left his sister, defended by a body of troops, and returned to Messina. On the borders of the strait, overlooking the English camp, there was a convent of Greek monks, having a strong natural position and capable of being easily fortified. Richard drove out the monks, and placed in their stead a strong garrison, who turned the monastery into a fortress, and issued thence on licentious excursions through the town and the neighbourhood. The disorders of the foreigners at length aroused the indignation of the Sicilians, who, jealous of the honour of their wives and daughters, suddenly attacked the English, who were in the city, and, at the same time, closed the gates of the town. The whole camp speedily took to arms, and assembled without the walls, making a reckless and unorganised assault upon them. Richard having received news of the tumult, mounted his horse and rode hastily among his soldiers, beating them back with a truncheon which he carried in his hand. By exertions of this kind, joined to the influence of his character, he succeeded in restraining his troops, not, however, before some animosities which had arisen between them and the French soldiers, had found vent in several partial combats. The kings of France and England held a solemn meeting, at which to arrange against future differences of this kind, as well as to determine upon a peace with the Sicilians. On the hill overlooking the camp a number of the natives were assembled, and, during the conference, they attacked a few stragglers from the Norman camp. Having learnt the cause of the uproar, Richard immediately called his men to arms, drove the Sicilians from the hill, and followed them to the walls of the city, which the English now attacked under the direction of their prince. The troops of Tancred made little resistance against their impetuous assailants; the town was carried by storm, and Richard raised his banner on the walls as

though the town had become exclusively his. The jealousy of Philip was excited, and a rupture took place between the two princes, which was only appeased by the town being given into the hands of the knights Hospitallers and knights Templars, who were to hold possession of it until the claims of Richard against Tancred had been finally adjusted.

In addition to the territories assigned to Joan as a dowry, she was entitled, as queen of Sicily, to a golden table, twelve feet long, and a foot and a half broad; a golden chair; two golden tressels for supporting the table; twenty-four silver cups, and as many silver dishes. William the Good had left in his will to Henry II., a contribution towards the Holy War in which that prince was

Richard Cœur-de-Lion before the Shrine of St. Januarius. (See page 214.)

proposing to engage. This legacy consisted of a tent of silk, to accommodate 200 persons seated, 60,000 measures of wheat, and 60,000 of barley, with 100 armed galleys, equipped and provisioned for two years. Henry II. died before his son-in-law, and, therefore, Richard could prefer no legal claim in right of his father. He nevertheless demanded that all these things should be given up to him, as well as the treasures to which his sister was entitled. An agreement was ultimately entered into, by which a sum of twenty thousand gold oncie was paid to Joan, and a further sum of twenty thousand oncie to Richard, in satisfaction of their several demands. The legality of Richard's

Isaac of Cyprus praying Cœur-de-Lion for the restoration of his Daughter. (See page 220.)

claim was not acknowledged, but the money was paid to him ostensibly on a treaty of marriage, which was concluded between his young nephew Arthur and an infant daughter of Tancred. The payment thus took the form of a dower, and was to be returned in case either of the children died before they reached a marriageable age.

The money of which Richard thus became possessed, was lavished with the utmost prodigality. His tastes were magnificent; and the extraordinary fame which he had acquired throughout Europe, was due no less to his own gigantic strength and brilliant valour, than to the glittering halo of romance which surrounded him and the splendour with which he dazzled the eyes of his followers. Soldiers of fortune of every country came to offer their swords to Cœur-de-Lion, and were received with welcome and entertainment. Tournaments and spectacles of various kinds succeeded each other; the sounds of mirth and music resounded through the camps; troubadours and jongleurs offered their feats of skill, or songs of war and beauty secure of a liberal reward. Relying upon his strong arm to replenish his coffers, Richard showered gifts and largesses upon all comers, and, at a great banquet which he gave to the knights of both armies, he sent away each of his guests with a large present of money. Thus, throughout the winter, the soldiers of the north gave themselves up to luxury and pleasure under the sunny sky of Sicily. But Cœur-de-Lion was no mere voluptuary. If, in many respects, he bore a resemblance to the gallant but ill-fated Robert of Normandy, he possessed, at the same time, a degree of intellectual power and energy little inferior to that of William the Conqueror. Amidst the glare of rich banquets and gorgeous spectacles; amidst the tinkling of harps whose strings were attuned to flattery, and the glances of bright eyes, which brought their tribute of admiration to the young prince of the Lion Heart, his ardent nature languished and longed for activity. There

was a strong impulsive force within the men of those days, which rendered exertion the only pleasure—ease and rest a punishment not to be endured. Cut off for a time from the excitements of battle, Richard sought occupation in the field of theological controversy, and the exercises of religion.

At this time a certain Calabrian monk, named Joachim, abbot of Curacio, had made himself famous throughout Europe by his writings and preachings against the abuses of the Court of Rome. We have already seen how, at intervals during the middle ages, some sandalled monk would rise up from obscurity, and, by the mere force of intellect, with no advantages of outward circumstances, would obtain a power over the minds of men, compared to which that of princes was as nothing. This influence was of a purely personal nature, and was attained by the gift of eloquence. The books which abbot Joachim had written would have availed little; they appealed only to the few who could read them, and to posterity; but the *man* could speak his thought in the ear of the present. We know little, in these later times, of the meaning of the word eloquence; we apply it to what is written—to thoughts expressed upon inanimate paper—dull and lifeless, as words from the mouth of a statue. The growth of civilisation is unfavourable to eloquence, for civilisation is built up of laws and customs, and the language of the heart defies all law, and pays no deference to expediency. The modern teacher dares not trust his heart. Sermons are written; speeches are prepared; periods carefully rounded; sentiments weighed in the nicest balance;—even the tone of the voice, and the motion of the arm, are studied beforehand under a master. The influence attained is exactly commensurate with the means employed, and the listeners find themselves on a level of caution, equally removed from danger on the one hand, or of excellence on the other. But such a level is not the normal condition of the human mind. When, at rare intervals, the torch of enthusiasm is lighted by some earnest man, thousands will burst away to follow the flame, though it lead them to utter destruction. If, in our own day, we have seen many of the intelligent people of this country quitting their homes to seek an Utopia of sensualism among the wilds of the far West; if we have seen them listening to evil counsel, warmly urged, while the voice of the minister of religion fell unheeded on their ears, as that of a paid advocate of virtue, we may understand the influence exercised in earlier times by those whose eloquence derived new force and authority from their sacred calling.

Richard Cœur-de-Lion, like his ancestors, recognised that subtle force of intellect whose influence among men surpassed that of laws or armies; he heard of the fame of the abbot Joachim and desired to see him. The king and the monk met together at Messina, where a long theological discussion took place between these strange disputants. Joachim, like all the other clergy of the age, gave his authority in favour of the crusade. He assumed the gift of inspiration, and, like a prophet of old, told the king to go forth and conquer; the infidel should be scattered before the Christian host, and the banner of the cross be raised once more over the walls of Jerusalem. These were but the ravings of fanaticism, and were utterly falsified by the event, but their influence, meanwhile, was none the less upon those who listened and regarded the speaker as a prophet. Richard's mind was of higher order, and he is said to have called the monk a vain babbler, whose words were unworthy of attention. It is not probable, however, that he expressed such an opinion publicly, for he could not be insensible to the effect of such predictions upon the minds of his soldiers.

Not long after this discussion, Richard rode to the town of Catania, where he had appointed to meet Tancred for the first time. With all the state and magnificence suited to the occasion, the two kings walked in procession to the church, when, forgetting all former differences, they took vows of mutual friendship, and performed their devotions together before the shrine of St. Agatha. On the return of Cœur-de-Lion to Messina, the Sicilian king accompanied him for many miles, and at the moment of parting gave into his hands a letter written by Philip of France, in which Philip proposed to ally himself with Tancred, and to drive the English monarch out of the country.

Some days elapsed before Richard made any use of this communication; but he met Philip with haughtiness and reserve, and frequent disputes took place between them. At length, during one of these altercations, Cœur-de-Lion suddenly produced the letter, and asked whether he knew the handwriting. Philip indignantly declared it to be a forgery, and accused Richard of seeking a cause of quarrel by which means he might break off his contract of marriage with the princess Alice, Philip's sister. Richard replied calmly that he could not marry the lady Alice, since it was well known that she had born a son to his father, king Henry. This circumstance, if true, was well known to Richard during his father's lifetime, when he had so frequently demanded that his bride should be given up to him; a request which, it is evident, had merely been made as a pretext for rebellion. Richard now offered proofs of what he had alleged, and whatever may have been the force of these proofs, Philip consented to give up the contest. In the days of chivalry, as now, money was accepted in compensation for breaches of such contracts, and Philip sold the honour of his sister for an annual pension of 2,000 marks for five years. For this sum he gave Richard permission to marry whoever he pleased.*

Cœur-de-Lion had already chosen his bride. Some three years before, while staying at the court of Navarre, he had fallen in love with Berengaria, the daughter of the king of that country. The young princess is described as having been very beautiful, of extremely youthful and delicate appearance, presenting in every respect the most striking contrast to the robust frame and gigantic presence of her lover. Their passion seems to have been more romantic and sincere than usually happens in similar cases. It is certain that Richard asked for no dowry with his bride, sought for no political advantages, but merely despatched his mother, queen Eleanor, to ask the lady's hand. Such conduct alone might have won the heart of Berengaria, even though she had not been already interested in his favour. Undeterred by the dangers and difficulties of the journey across the Alps, she at once set out to join her intended husband. The queen and the princess travelled with a suitable escort, and reached Naples in safety. Thence they passed on to the city of Brindisi, where they waited until the French king should have departed to the Holy Land.

* Roger of Hoveden.

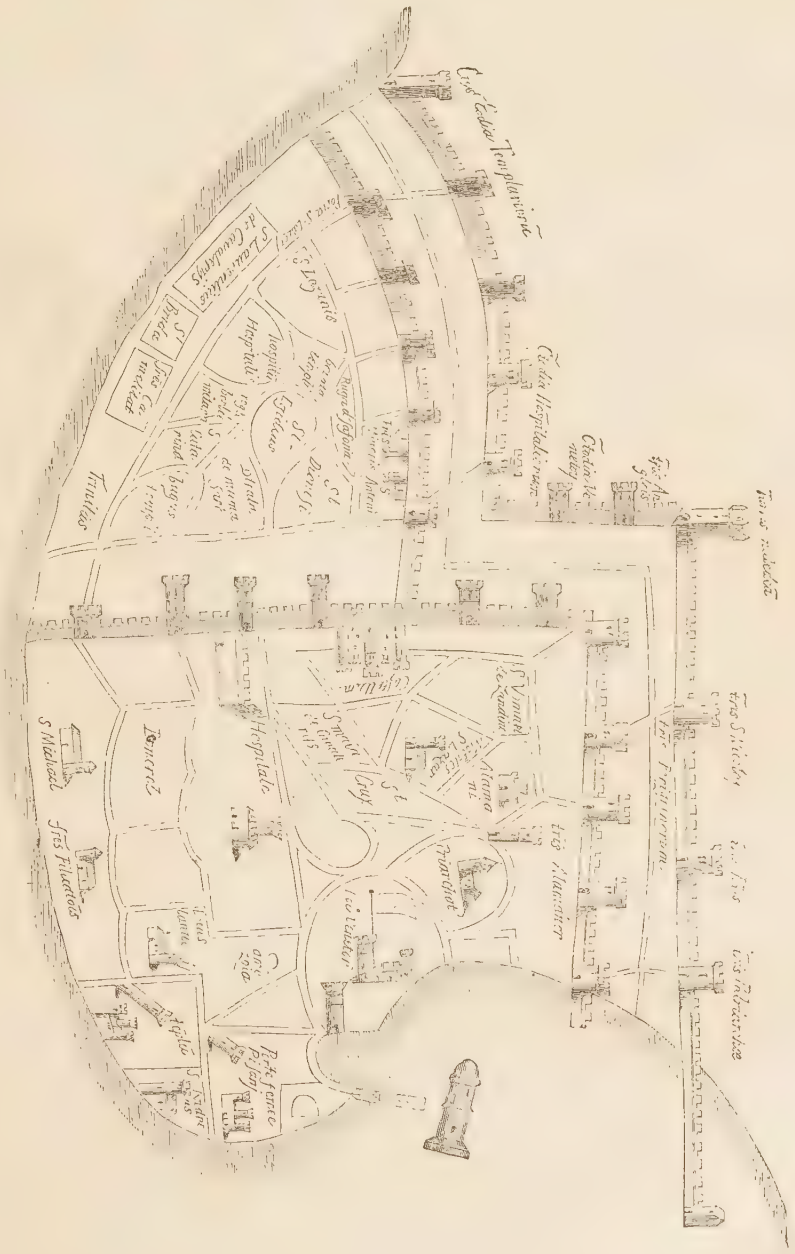
CHAPTER XLVII.

Reign of Richard I. continued—The Siege of Acre—Progress of the Crusade—The Battle of Jaffa—Truce between Richard and Saladin—Termination of the Third Crusade.

PHILIP set sail for Acre on the 30th March, 1199; and Richard, at the same time, proceeded to Riggio, on the coast of Calabria, where he took on board his young bride, with the queen Eleanor, and carried them to Messina. The season of Lent being not yet over, the marriage was deferred, and Eleanor, having confided her charge to the care of her own daughter Joan, returned to England.

Within a few days afterwards the English fleet was ready for sea, and passed with a stiff breeze through the Straits of Messina. More than two hundred vessels were there, some of large size with three masts, and all well appointed and gaily decked with the banners of the crusaders. Never before had so gallant an armament been seen in those waters, and as the brilliant pageant moved away, the Sicilians gathered in multitudes on the shores with cries of admiration. In those days war was with half the world the business of life; women did not hesitate to share the dangers of those they loved, and the smile of beauty was at once the incentive and the reward of valour. Joan and Berengaria accompanied the expedition, and Richard, with a delicacy which belonged to his chivalrous character, fitted up a splendid galley which was allotted to their separate use.

The fleet was not destined to proceed far in such gallant



Plan of the Town of Acre in the 14th Century, from a Drawing by Martino Sanuto, in the Twenty-first Volume of the Archæologia.

trim. Within a few hours a heavy storm arose, and many of the ships, dismasted and at the mercy of the waves, were cast on shore and broken to pieces. Richard himself narrowly escaped shipwreck, and was compelled to put into the island of Rhodes, not knowing what had become of the vessel of his bride. While he lay there in the greatest anxiety of mind, he learnt that two of his ships had been wrecked on the coast of Cyprus, and that his people had been plundered and cast into prison by the natives. Vowing vengeance, Richard collected all the vessels which had arrived at Rhodes, and immediately proceeded to the succour of the captives. On approaching the harbour of Limasol, in Cyprus, he fell in with the galley of Joan and Berengaria, who, like himself, had escaped from the storm, but who had hesitated to trust themselves nearer to the shore.

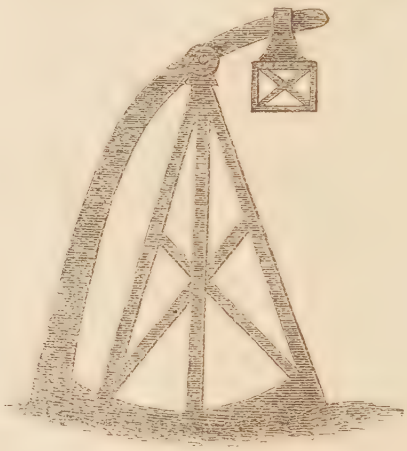
The island of Cyprus was at that time colonised by the Greeks, under the rule of a prince of the race of the Comneni, named Isaac, who called himself "emperor of Cyprus." This mighty monarch of a score of square miles seems to have known little of the character of the English king, for when Richard demanded satisfaction for the injuries done to the crusaders, he returned an arrogant refusal, and drew up his soldiers in battle array upon the shore. Cœur-de-Lion immediately landed a body of troops, who put to flight the half-naked men of Cyprus, and took possession of the city.

Isaac now sent in his submission to the conqueror, and on a plain near Limasol a conference took place between them. Richard demanded, not only an indemnity in money, but also that the "emperor of Cyprus" should do homage to him, and should accompany him to Palestine with a thousand of his best warriors. The daughter and heiress of Isaac was to be placed in Richard's hands as a hostage for the good faith of her father. The Greek, with that mixture of shrewdness and deceit characteristic of his race, consented to these terms, and on the same night he escaped from the guards placed over him by Richard, and organised new plans, which proved as vain as before, to resist the invaders.

Leaving a garrison at Limasol, Richard sailed round the island, capturing all the ships of the Cypriots and taking possession of their towns. Nicosia, the capital, surrendered with little resistance, and among the prisoners who fell into his hands was the young princess, the daughter of Isaac. The "emperor" loved his child, and when he heard of her capture he made no further resistance, but quitting a monastery in which he had fortified himself, he placed himself at once in the power of Richard, fell at his feet, and prayed that his daughter might be restored to him. Cœur-de-Lion refused the request, and committed him to prison, directing that, in consideration of the rank he assumed, he should be bound with chains of silver instead of iron. It is difficult to understand how any rational being should have derived satisfaction from such a distinction; but it appears that the "emperor of Cyprus" did so, and expressed himself much gratified by the honour done him.

At Limasol there were great stores of provisions of all kinds, and a splendid festival was prepared to celebrate the landing of the princess Berengaria. Here, at length, Cœur-de-Lion claimed his bride, and the marriage ceremony was performed by the bishop of Evreux. For a few days the accoutrements of war were put aside, the songs of the minstrels were again heard through the camp, and the sweet wine of Cyprus lent its intoxicating influence to the scene of revelry. Richard, however, was pre-eminently a soldier; martial glory was his true mistress, and he did not long delay the expedition on which he was engaged. In little more than a month after his arrival at Cyprus, the fleet set sail for Acre, and arrived there on the 8th of June.

All the chivalry of Europe were collected before this city, which was regarded as the key to the Holy Land. Hospitallers and Templars, priests and princes, knights of high and low degree, from every Christian country, had flocked to lay down their lives in a cause which they believed to be sacred. For two years before the arrival of Richard, the siege had been carried on with all the military skill of the age; but, while thousands * of the besiegers fell victims to disease and privation, or to their own desperate valour, the city still held out, and its massive walls



Machine for throwing Stones, used at the siege of Acre.

defied the force of the mightiest engines of war. Each month brought new reinforcements to the banner of the cross, and thus an army to which Europe could find no equal, maintained its numerical strength while the work of death went on.

Saladin, one of the greatest names in Eastern history, had posted his immense forces upon the heights about Mount Carmel, whence he watched the great armament of Richard, still numbering more than one hundred sail, as it advanced into the roadstead of Acre. The fame of Cœur-de-Lion had gone before him, and the crusaders hailed his approach with shouts of rejoicing. Gay banners flashed in the sun, and trumpets and drums sounded their loudest note of welcome. Philip, however, could not witness without envy the power and splendour of his ally. Not many days elapsed before a quarrel took place between them; and each, refusing to act in concert with the other, made separate attacks upon the town, in the hope of obtaining the exclusive honour of the capture. Both of these ill-judged attempts were unsuccessful, and were attended with heavy loss.

At length the brave garrison of Acre, cut off from all supplies, were compelled to offer terms of capitulation.

* The accounts of different writers vary considerably, but one of the lowest estimates states that nearly 200,000 men, among whom were six archbishops and many bishops and nobles of high rank, perished before the walls of Acre.

They agreed to surrender possession of the city, together with all the Christian prisoners it contained, and the wood of the true cross. A sum of two hundred thousand pieces of gold was to be paid by Saladin within forty days, as a ransom for the lives of the inhabitants, several thousands of whom were retained as hostages for the performance of these conditions.

The army of the cross entered Acre on the 12th of June, 1191, and at the same time Saladin withdrew from the neighbouring heights, and proceeded a short distance into the interior to concentrate his forces. Soon afterwards Philip of France expressed his intention to return to Europe. The reason he gave for doing so was the bad state of his health; and it is not improbable that this prince, who seems to have possessed neither the occasional religious impulses nor the warlike spirit of Cœur de Lion, should have found the first approaches of disease sufficient to deter him from the toils and dangers of a journey to the Holy Sepulchre. Other causes were, however, at work. The title of king of Jerusalem was still a subject of dispute among the crusaders, although the city itself was now in the hands of the infidel. The crown had been assumed by Guy of Lusignan, in right of his wife Sybilla, a descendant of Godfrey of Bouillon. During the siege of Acre, Sybilla died; and her sister Isabella, who had married Conrad of Montferrat, prince of Tyre, put in her claim to confer the title on her husband. While Philip had declared in favour of Conrad, Richard—who seems to have acted merely from the desire of opposing his ally—supported the cause of Lusignan, and acknowledged him king of Jerusalem. In this, as in every other dispute between the two monarchs, Philip was compelled to yield; but he did so with an ill grace: and it was hardly to be expected that the king of France could long submit to such a course of humiliation. He determined to return to his own country, where his will was law, and his power absolute; and where, too, he might have opportunity, during the absence of the English king, to seize upon some portion of his territories, and extend the rather circumscribed limits of the French kingdom.

Richard at first received the news of Philip's intended departure with a malediction, calling down shame upon his head for deserting the holy cause in which he was engaged. The feeling of anger seems soon to have given place to something like contempt, for Cœur de Lion added, "Let him go, if his health needs it, and he cannot live away from Paris." But the probable designs of the French king were not overlooked; and he was compelled to take an oath that he would make no aggression upon English territories during the absence of Richard in Palestine. He also agreed to leave at Acre 10,000 men, commanded by the duke of Burgundy, but under the control of Cœur-de-Lion.

Soon after Philip quitted Acre, the term of forty days appointed for the ransom of the Saracen captives expired. No ransom had been received. The messengers of Richard, who made their way into the presence of the great soldan, were received with the highest courtesy, and were dismissed with costly presents to their master; but to the demand for money Saladin returned no answer. It was reported among the crusaders that he had massacred the Christian prisoners in his power; and a great excitement arose among the troops at Acre, who called loudly for vengeance. And now took place one of the worst of those atrocious deeds which stain the history of the crusades. On the forty-first day, under the orders of Richard and the duke of Burgundy, the unhappy Saracen captives were led out beyond the camps, and were there butchered without mercy, some few rich men only being spared, in the hope that large sums would be obtained for their ransom.* So blinded were the crusaders by their fanatic zeal, that this massacre in cold blood was regarded by the perpetrators as a righteous deed, acceptable to Heaven. Not only so, but the contemporary historians—men bred up in the cloister, whose character, no less than their religion, should have led them to recoil at such a deed—recorded it with exultation, while minstrels celebrated it in their songs. The acts of ferocity which characterised this massacre would be considered to disgrace the most hardened assassin of modern times. The soldiers ripped up the bodies of their victims, in the hope of finding precious stones, which they were supposed to have swallowed for concealment; and it is said that many valuable jewels were, in fact, discovered in this manner. Since the twelfth century the world has made some progress in humanity; but it is matter for speculation whether the people of a future time may not regard the wars and duels of our day with the same feelings with which we read of the crimes of the Middle Ages.

On receiving the news of the massacre, Saladin put to death all the Christian prisoners in his hands. Such an act of retaliation, however it may now be regarded, was in accordance with the usages of the time; and it is hardly to be expected that the Moslem should display more mercy than the Christian. With hands reeking with the blood of their victims, the crusaders returned to the city, where they gave themselves up to debauchery and excess. Many of them would probably have been well disposed to go no farther; but Richard roused them once more into activity, and his will was not to be resisted. He left his young wife and his sister behind him, defended by a strong garrison; and strictly forbade women of all ranks from accompanying the army. He quitted Acre on the 22nd of August, with about thirty thousand men, of all the nations of Christendom, and took his way along the sea shore, towards Ascalon. Saladin, whose scouts were everywhere, was speedily apprised of the march of the Crusaders; and he appeared at a distance with a great army, hovering about them, and keeping them continually in expectation of attack. The troops of Richard, however, marched fearlessly on; and when, after a day's march across those burning plains, exhausted by the weight of their heavy armour, they reached a halting-place, a herald stood forth from each camp, and cried aloud three times, "Save the Holy Sepulchre!" and the whole army knelt down, and said, "Amen!" Human nature displays the most striking contrasts where the fortunes of men are subject to extremes of vicissitude; and thus the soldiers who one day were engaged in acts of brutal cruelty or sensuality, on the next might be seen marching to the death with a devotion which, if mistaken, was not the less sublime.

When Richard had advanced as far as Azotus, the Ashdod of Holy Writ, he was opposed by the Saracen forces, ranged in order of battle. Saladin, whose skill as a general was scarcely inferior to that of Cœur-de-Lion himself,

* Roger of Hoveden states that five thousand infidels were thus destroyed. Other accounts give even a larger number.

conducted the attack in person: and, for a time, the Christian troops gave way before him. Richard, who commanded the centre of the army, waited, with great coolness, until the Saracens had exhausted their arrows; then placing himself at the head of his knights, and brandishing the formidable battle-axe which was his favourite weapon, he rushed upon the enemy, slaying with his own hand all who fell within his reach. Many of the feats of valour attributed to him by the chronielers are wholly incredible; but, after making all reasonable deduction for exaggeration, enough remains to prove that Cœur-de-Lion deserved the proud surname which he bore, and that his strength and valour were alike without a parallel. The Saracen army, numerous as it was, could not withstand the charge of the mail-clad warriors of Europe; and Saladin was compelled to make a hasty

"Save the Holy Sepulchre!"

retreat, leaving behind him seven thousand dead upon the field.

Richard advanced to Jaffa, the Joppa of the Bible, of which city he obtained possession without opposition; but here a delay took place, which proved fatal to the success of the expedition. Some of the chief men of the army alleged that it would be necessary to repair the fortifications of Joppa, for the purpose of placing it in a condition of defence. The soldiers, remembering the pleasures of Acre, willingly adopted a pretext which afforded a new opportunity of rest and enjoyment; and Richard himself, attracted by the field sports to be obtained in the neighbourhood, appears to have laid aside for a time his customary energy. Saladin, who had recovered from his defeat, and was intent upon vengeance, was known to be in the neighbourhood, with an army even larger than before; but Cœur-de-Lion, undisturbed by this circumstance, rode about the country with a small escort. Many strange

Richard Cœur de Lion at the Battle of Jaffa.

adventures are told in connection with these expeditions; and it would appear that Richard was often in imminent danger of being captured—a fate from which his courage, or good fortune, invariably saved him. On one occasion a party of Templars had been taken prisoners. The news being brought to Richard, he sent the earl of Leicester to their assistance, with the message that he would come himself as soon as he could get on his armour. Before he had done so, however, he learnt that the earl had also been defeated. Delaying no longer, the Lion Heart seized his battle-axe, and leaping on his war-horse, galloped off to the scene of action, where the effect produced by his presence, and his own extraordinary exertions, caused the Saracens to be put to flight, and the Templars and the earl of Leicester were rescued. The battle-axe of Cœur-de-Lion had twenty pounds of steel wrought into the head of it, and there is no doubt that in his hands it was a most formidable weapon.

Various negotiations now ensued, which appear to have led to nothing, and were probably devised by the Saracens merely to gain time. The envoy who passed between the two camps on these occasions was Saif-ed-Deen, or Saphadin, the brother of Saladin, who was a man of great ability, and who conducted his missions in such a manner as to gain the favour of Cœur-de-Lion. At length, in the month of November, the fortifications of Jaffa were completed, negotiations were broken off, and the crusaders resumed their march. The sky was black with tempest, and as they crossed the plain of Sharon, where now the rose and lily of the valley bloomed no longer, a violent wind arose and thick rain began to fall. The heaviest storms are found in those countries where the sun shines brightest; and it was now the commencement of the rainy season. The soldiers of the cross, ill-provided with protection against such weather, pitched their camp at Ramula, the Arimathea of Scripture; but the streams which descended from the mountains inundated the encampment, and the winds tore up the tents which were their only shelter. Struggling on wearily they reached Bethany, which was within twelve miles of Jerusalem, but here they found it impossible to proceed further. Famine and disease had decimated the troops, and those who were still able to bear arms were ill-suited to cope with an enemy. Richard was therefore compelled to retrace his steps, and he marched back rapidly to Ascalon, there to recruit his forces.

The fortifications of Ascalon had been dismantled by Saladin; but Cœur-de-Lion, whose energetic spirit no reverses could subdue, set himself immediately to restore the defences, and appeared among his men doing the work of a mason. Novelist or romancer never imagined more striking contrasts than are presented to us in the sober records of the middle ages, and thus we find the king who lately was the centre of unexampled pomp and splendour at Messina, now wielding the trowel and the pickaxe upon the walls of Ascalon. The example set by Richard was attended with the best effects; princes and nobles, bishops and their clergy worked beside him as masons and carpenters, thinking it no shame to do what the king of England had done. The only exception was the duke of Austria, and on his refusal, it is related that Cœur-de-Lion kicked or struck that prince, and turned him and his retainers out of the town.

Having placed Ascalon in a condition of defence, Richard restored other fortifications destroyed by Saladin along the coast. These works, however, were attended with a vast expense, and Richard's generosity, which appears to have been without stint, whether much or little was at his command, hastened the exhaustion of his finances. The French and other foreign troops attached to his army were kept together by the largesses he gave them; but as the treasury became empty they relaxed in their obedience, and their national animosities found vent in repeated quarrels and disturbances. The dispute between Conrad of Montferrat and Guy of Lusignan for the crown of Jerusalem was again renewed. Conrad, whose character was vacillating and treacherous, was nevertheless a man of considerable ability and of high military renown. Having secured the assistance of the Genoese, he defied the power of the king of England, and a civil war appeared to be imminent among the Christians of Palestine. The Pisans, whose old hatred against the Genoese led them to take the opposite side, declared for Lusignan, and frequent combats took place in the very streets of Acre, between the opposing factions. Richard quitted Ascalon and succeeded in repressing these tumults. He endeavoured to restore unanimity to the army, and to conciliate the marquis of Montferrat, but that haughty chief rejected his offers and entrenched himself in the town of Tyre, with a number of disaffected soldiers of different nations who had joined his standard.

Saladin soon became aware of the dissensions in the Christian army, and he made preparations for striking what he hoped would be a decisive and successful blow. But in the meanwhile he was unexpectedly met by proposals for peace from Cœur-de-Lion, who sent him word that he demanded only the possession of Jerusalem and the wood of the true cross. The soldan returned for answer that the blessed city* was as dear to the Moslem as to the Christian, and would never be delivered up except by force.

The unusual course pursued by Richard was not to be attributed to such an inadequate cause as the disaffection of a part of his troops. He had lately received letters from his mother Queen Eleanor, and from William Longchamp, whom he had appointed chancellor in his absence, detailing various conspiracies which were fraught with the greatest danger to the throne. It is not necessary to interrupt the narrative for the purpose of relating the particulars of these matters; they will be given in detail when the history returns to the consideration of events in England. It is enough to say that they were of a nature to cause the greatest disquietude, even to the strong mind of Cœur-de-Lion. It is reported that he set on foot new negotiations with Saladin, which continued for some time, and that he even proposed that the contest should be terminated by the marriage of his own sister Joan with Saphadin, the brother of the Sultan. This extraordinary scheme, if it ever really was entertained, was defeated by religious obstacles; the clergy launching the thunders of the church against all those who should sanction the union between a Christian princess and a chief of the infidels.

During this time we read of numerous acts of courtesy, or, as it might seem, even of friendship passing between Richard and Saladin. The institutions of chivalry had

* "El Gootz," or "The Blessed City," is the Arab name of Jerusalem to this day.

been carried by the Europeans into Palestine, and had commended themselves to favour wherever a true soldier was to be found. In the East, as in the West, they shed a transient gleam of sunshine upon the bloody landscape of war, arousing whatever there is of high or noble to be found in poor humanity. Few historians have done justice to the character of Saladin; it is not easy for us now to cast our minds back, as it were, into that remote age and country in which he lived, and to weigh the acts of his life against the knowledge which was given him to guide them. We read history with more or less of prejudice and intolerance, viewing with the bright light of the nineteenth century those blots upon its page, which lay unseen in the early dawn of Christianity. And yet there is no name (but One) in all the records of the past, which we should dare to bring to the test of abstract virtue. The history of the world is the history of moral as of social advancement; the virtues of one age are the abomination of the next, and this process is continually going on. Thus slowly through the centuries rises the stately edifice of civilisation, whose fair proportions expand and grow in beauty with succeeding generations.

Saladin possessed abilities of a very high order, joined to bodily strength little inferior to that of Cœur-de-Lion himself. He was skilled in the learning of the East, added to which he possessed that refinement of manners induced by the usages of chivalry. The virtues of a warlike age appeared in him pre-eminently; he was brave, generous, and true to his word, preserving his plighted faith with a degree of scrupulousness not often observed by the princes of Christendom.

Coins of Sovereigns of the Seljuk Dynasty.

Descended from the race of the Seljuks, he had warmly embraced the religion of Mahomet, whose doctrines taught him to pursue to utter destruction all the enemies of the prophet. But Saladin was no bigoted Mussulman, and when the foes he had conquered appeared before him as suppliants, he seldom failed to grant the mercy they implored. It is needless to say that this picture has its reverse, and that the character of the great soldan was not altogether blameless. He was in the highest degree ambitious, and his elevation to the throne was obtained by the unscrupulous shedding of blood. He trampled down whomsoever stood in his way; but, having attained that elevation, he proved himself a wise and just monarch, and his rule, on the whole, was free from tyranny.

The soldan and the Christian king, both of whom stood far above their contemporaries in military prowess and ability, had learnt mutual respect, and not all the injuries which each had inflicted on the other had power to subdue this feeling. Great minds can afford to be generous, and the depreciation of the merits of a rival seldom arises from any other cause than a consciousness of inferiority. Saladin and Richard met together many times with interchanges of courtesy, and the soldiers of both armies mingled in the tournament and in other martial exercises. Where the laws of chivalry prevailed, the warrior sheathed his enmity with his sword, and would have regarded it as a foul stain upon his knighthood to doubt for a moment the faith pledged to him by a foeman.

Pilgrims were continually arriving in the Holy Land from Europe, and from each traveller who appeared in the presence of Richard, he learnt news which compelled him to hasten his return to England, although he had sworn never to abandon the expedition so long as he had a war-horse to eat. In the hope of establishing peace among all parties, he consented that Conrad of Montferrat should be crowned king of Jerusalem, and gave to Lusignan, by way of compensation, the island of Cyprus. It is probable that the energetic character of Conrad might ultimately have enabled him to obtain possession of Jerusalem, but at the time when he was preparing for his coronation, he was murdered in the streets of Tyre, by two men of the sect of the Assassins. This name, then quite new to the languages of Europe, was applied to those fanatical Moslems who devoted themselves to assassinating the enemies of their faith by surprise, in the belief that they should thus secure admission into paradise. In the mountain defiles of Lebanon, there lived a whole tribe of these enthusiasts, under the rule of the Old Man* of the Mountain, a mysterious chief, whose name became a sound of terror throughout Europe. They were called in Arabic "Haschischi," from an intoxicating plant well known in the East, which they made use of to stupefy the brain and excite themselves to their desperate deeds of blood.

It would appear that Conrad was murdered in revenge for certain injuries which he had inflicted upon this extraordinary people. An Arabic writer relates that when the two Assassins were seized and put to the torture, they confessed that they had been employed by the king of England; but this account differs from others, and is so completely at variance with all we know of the Assassins, as well as with the character of Richard, that it may be at once rejected as fabulous. Apart from the arguments which may be adduced to show, from the previous arrangements of the king, that he had no anticipation of the death of Conrad, the whole tenour of the life of Cœur-de-Lion serves to prove that he was not the man to strike a foe in secret. The French and German factions, however, at once spread a report that he had instigated the murder, and letters were sent to Philip of France containing the same news. Philip, who contemplated a descent upon the English territory, eagerly seized a pretext for his treason. He applied to the pope to release him from his oath of peace, and declared that he had received a caution that the king of England had sent some of those dreaded Assassins of the East to murder him. Ostensibly with a view to repel these designs, he appointed a body-guard of armed men to attend

* The Arabic word Scheik, translated by the Crusaders Old Man, means also the chief of a tribe.

him wherever he went, and this institution survived in France for centuries after the name of the Old Man of the Mountain was forgotten.

During the tumult which followed the death of Conrad, count Henry of Champagne, the nephew of Richard, appeared on the scene, and the people of Tyre placed him in possession of the town as well as of the other territories held by their late prince. Soon afterwards Henry married the young widow of Conrad, receiving with her hand the title to the imaginary crown, and he was generally acknowledged by the crusaders as king of Jerusalem.

With each succeeding month appeared the greater need for the presence of Richard in England; but he concealed his uneasiness, and with the view of repressing the growing discontent in his army, he publicly proclaimed his intention to remain for another year in Palestine. Laying aside for a time all considerations connected with affairs at home, he determined to give his whole energies to bring to a successful termination the expedition in which he was engaged. Having at length restored something like unanimity to his troops and brought them into an efficient state, he once more led them on the way to Jerusalem. The army resumed its march in the month of May, and reached the valley of Hebron, which was destined to be the extent of its journey. The circumstances which induced Richard to relinquish his long-cherished enterprise cannot now be known with certainty. Various versions are given by the different historians; but we find no occurrence which appears of sufficient importance to have changed the purpose of Cœur-de-Lion. It is certain, however, that a council assembled

Richard Cœur de Lion.

by the king decided upon the propriety of attacking Cairo which was the main store-house of Saladin, rather than to march upon Jerusalem. No sooner was it known among the troops that a counter-march was intended, than they threw aside all discipline, great numbers of them deserted, and Richard was compelled to return to Acre, as the only means of regaining the authority he had lost.

Saladin, who kept watch from the mountains upon all the movements of the crusaders, perceived the disorganised condition of the army, and chose that moment for an attack upon Jaffa, which he captured with little resistance. On learning the news Richard at once despatched by land the troops who remained with him, while he with a small body of knights proceeded by sea to the relief of the town. Cœur-de-Lion never showed his splendid military talents more strikingly than on this occasion. On arriving opposite the town, he found a vast host of the Saracens drawn up on the shore to receive him. His companions counselled him to turn back, saying that it was little else than madness to attack such overwhelming numbers; but Cœur-de-Lion knew that to dare is to reach half-way to victory, and he had learned to despise the nice calculation of probabilities. He leaped into the water, and cried "Cursed for ever be he who follows me not!" At such a call no knight who desired to keep his spurs would dare to hang back, and one and all followed their leader to the shore, threw themselves upon the thick ranks of the enemy, and put them to flight. The gallant band of Richard then entered Jaffa, where they were joined by the troops who had marched by land.

On the following day the main body of the Saracen army, with Saladin at their head, advanced upon the town. Richard went forth to meet them on the plain, and a pitched battle ensued, in which, after many hours of hard fighting, he defeated them with great slaughter. It is scarcely too much to say that this success against a vastly superior force was due, in a great measure, to the extraordinary exertions of Cœur-de-Lion himself. Wherever he stretched out his ponderous battle-axe, horse and man went down before him; and it is said that such was the terror he inspired, that whole bodies of the Saracen troops would turn and fly at his approach. Although the expedition to the Holy Land was not destined to attain its object, the fame of its leader was raised both in the East and in the West to a height which has never been equalled. For hundreds of years the name of Richard Cœur-de-Lion was employed by Syrian mothers to silence their infants; and if a horse suddenly started from the way, his rider was wont to exclaim, "Dost thou think king Richard is in that bush?" *

The battle of Jaffa was Cœur-de-Lion's last victory in the Holy Land. His exertions on that day brought on a violent fever, and the state of his health, as well as the necessity of a return to England, induced him to conclude a treaty with his gallant enemy, on terms which Saladin was glad to accept. A truce was proclaimed for three years, three months, three days, and three hours; the towns of Jaffa and Tyre were to remain in the hands of the Christians, and they were to be permitted at all times to visit Jerusalem as pilgrims, without persecution or injury. To the French, who had refused to take part in the battle of Jaffa, Richard denied the benefits of this treaty, and told them that since they had held back from the fight, they were not worthy to enter the Holy City. The remaining portions of the army, casting aside their weapons of war, made the pilgrimage in safety, protected from all molestation by the pledge of Saladin. And yet the massacre of Acre was fresh in the memory of the Moslems, and many of the kinsmen of those who had perished there threw themselves at the feet of their chief, and implored him to take vengeance for the ruthless deed upon the Christians now in his power. But the soldan refused to listen to their entreaties, and replied that he had passed his word, which was sacred and unchangeable.

The third body of pilgrims which entered Jerusalem was headed by the bishop of Salisbury, who was received with great honour, and was admitted to a long interview with Saladin. Many questions were put to him by his royal entertainer, who, among other matters, desired to know in what light he was regarded among the Christians. "What do they say," he asked, "of your king, and what of me?" The bishop answered boldly, "My king stands unrivalled among all men for deeds of might and gifts of generosity; but your fame also is high, and were you but converted to the true faith, there would not be two such princes as you and he in all the world." Saladin replied in a speech as wise as it was generous. He readily gave his tribute of admiration to the brilliant valour of Richard, but said that he was too rash and impetuous, and that, for his own part, he would rather be famed for skill and prudence than for mere audacity. At the request of the bishop, Saladin granted his permission that the Latin clergy should be allowed to have separate establishments at Jerusalem, as had previously been the case with the eastern churches.

* Gibbon.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Reign of Richard I. continued—Departure of the Fleet from the Holy Land—Adventures of Richard in Germany—His Imprisonment—Condition of Affairs in England.

Richard set sail from Acre in October, 1192, with the queen Berengaria, his sister Joan, and all the knights and prelates who held fealty to the English crown. The proud heart of Cœur-de-Lion would not permit him to visit Jerusalem in the lowly guise of a pilgrim, but he quitted Palestine with feelings of the deepest regret; and he is reported to have stretched out his arms towards the hills, exclaiming, "Most holy land, I commend thee unto God's keeping. May He grant me life and health to return and rescue thee from the infidel."

A heavy storm arose—attributed to the sailors to the displeasure of Heaven—and overtook the returning fleet, scattering the ships and casting many of them ashore on the coasts of Barbary and Egypt. The vessel which carried Joan and Berengaria arrived in safety at a port in Sicily. Richard had followed in the same direction, with the intention of landing in southern Gaul, but he suddenly remembered that he had many bitter enemies in that country, in whose power it would be dangerous to trust himself, and he turned back to the Adriatic, dismissing the greater part of his followers, and intending to take his way homeward in disguise through Styria and Germany.

His vessel was attacked by Greek pirates; but he not only succeeded in repelling the attack, but in commanding their services to convey him to shore. Possibly, his name may have had an influence, even with these robbers of the sea; but, whatever were the means employed, it is certain

that they placed themselves under his orders, and that he quitted his own ship for one of theirs, in which—the better to secure his disguise—he proceeded to Zara in Dalmatia, and there landed. He was attended by a Norman baron, named Baldwin of Bethune, two chaplains, a few Templars, and some servants. Richard had assumed the dress of a palmer, and, having suffered his hair and beard to grow long, went by the name of Hugh the Merchant. He had however, not yet learned prudence, and those who were with him seemed to have been as deficient in this quality as himself. It was necessary to obtain a pass of safe conduct from the lord of the province, who, unfortunately, proved to be a relation of Conrad of Montferrat. The king sent a page for this purpose, desiring him to ask a passport for Baldwin of Bethune and Hugh the Merchant, who were pilgrims returning from Palestine, and ordering him to present to the governor a large ruby ring, which Richard had purchased in Syria from some Pisan merchants. Some of the chroniclers relate that the lord of Zara recognised the ruby, which was a famous stone; but in any case his suspicions were excited by seeing so valuable a jewel in the hands of men who professed themselves of such low degree. "This ring is the present of a prince, not of a merchant," he said to the messenger. "Thou hast not told the truth; thy master's name is not Hugh; he is king Richard. But since he has sent me the gift without knowing who I am,

The Bishop of Salisbury before Saladin.

tell him from me that I give him back his present, and that he may go in peace."

At this unexpected discovery the king did not hesitate to

Richard Cœur-de-Lion surprised by the Austrian Soldiers.

avail himself of the permission he had received, and, having obtained horses, he quitted the town on the same night. But the governor had no intention of permitting his enemy to escape from the country. He sent off messengers to his brother, the lord of a neighbouring province, to inform him that the dreaded king of England was about to pass through his territory in disguise. Among the retainers of the brother was a Norman knight named Roger, who was employed to go to all the taverns which received travellers, for the purpose of discovering the royal fugitive. For several days the Norman pursued his search without

success, but he was stimulated by a vast reward which was promised him, and at length he discovered the king. No sooner, however, had Richard confessed who he was, than the ties of country and the duties of allegiance to his native sovereign overcame the love of money in the breast of the soldier, and, instead of seizing him, he brought him a horse and entreated him to save himself by flight; then, having fallen at the king's feet with tears and begged his forgiveness, he hastened back to his employer, and told him that the story of Richard's arrival was false, and that the pilgrim was of no higher rank than a knight, and was named Baldwin of Bethune. The baron, furious with rage at his disappointment, ordered the arrest of Baldwin, who was cast into prison with several of his companions.

Meanwhile Cœur-de-Lion hastened on his way through Germany, attended only by a single knight, and by a boy who spoke the English language, then very similar to the Saxon dialect of the Continent. For three days and nights they travelled without food among mountains covered with snow, not knowing in which direction they were going. They entered the province which had formed the eastern boundary of the old empire of the Franks, and was called Ostrik or Œstreich, which means the East Country. This country, known to us by the name of Austria, was subject to the emperor of Germany, and was governed by a duke, whose capital was Vienna, on the Danube. This duke was the same Leopold whom Richard had insulted at Ascalon, and with whom also, on a former occasion, he had a serious quarrel. This occurrence took place at Acre, where the duke having presumed to raise his standard on a portion of the walls, Cœur-de-Lion seized the flag, and trampled it under foot.

Richard and his companions arrived at a small town near Vienna, exhausted with fatigue and fasting. It is not probable that the king could have proceeded so near the city without knowing where he was, but his immediate necessities were too pressing to leave any room for hesitation. Having taken a lodging, he sent the boy into the market-place to buy provisions; but here the same imprudence which had led to the former discovery was again exhibited. The boy was dressed in costly clothes, and these, together with the large sums of money which he exhibited, excited the suspicions of the citizens; but he made excuse that he was the servant of a rich merchant who was to arrive within three days at Vienna. When he returned to the king, he related what had happened, and begged him to escape while there was yet time. Richard, however, little accustomed to anticipate danger, and fatigued with his journey, determined to remain some days longer.

Meanwhile duke Leopold heard the rumour of the landing of his enemy at Zara, and incited at once by feelings of revenge, and by the hope of the large ransom which such a prisoner would command, sent out spies and armed men in all directions to search for him. As the duke was scarcely likely to anticipate the presence of the fugitive so near the capital, the search was made without success, and Cœur-de-Lion would doubtless have escaped undiscovered, if another strange act of carelessness had not drawn suspicion upon him. One day, when the same boy who had before been arrested was again in the market place, he was observed to carry in his girdle some embroidered gloves, such as were only worn by princes and great nobles on occasions of ceremony. He was again seized, and the torture was employed to bring him to confession. He revealed the truth, and pointed out the house in which king Richard was lodging. Cœur-de-Lion was in a deep sleep when the room in which he lay was entered by Austrian soldiers. He immediately sprung up, and seizing his sword, which lay beside him, he kept them at bay, vowing that he would surrender to none but their chief. The soldiers, superior as their numbers were, hesitated to undertake the task of disarming him, and the duke of Austria having been sent for, Cœur-de-Lion gave up the sword into his hands. Leopold received it with a bitter smile of triumph, and said, "You are fortunate in not having fallen prisoner to the friends of the marquis Conrad; for had you done so, you were but a dead man, if you had a thousand lives." The duke then caused him to be imprisoned in the castle of Turnsteign, where soldiers were appointed to guard the caged lion day and night with drawn swords.

No sooner did the emperor Henry VI. of Germany learn the news of the arrest of Cœur-de-Lion, than he sent to the duke of Austria, his vassal, commanding him to give up his prisoner. "A duke," said he, "has no right to imprison a king; that is the privilege only of an emperor." This strange proposition does not seem to have been denied by Leopold, who resigned the custody of the English king on condition of receiving a portion of his ransom. The agreement having been concluded, Richard was removed from Vienna at Easter, A.D. 1193, and was confined in one of the imperial castles at Worms.

The two German princes, of whom it is difficult to say which appears to us in the most despicable light, entertained an equal hatred for their noble prisoner. How high the brilliant valour and abilities of Richard had placed him above his contemporaries is evident from the jealousy with which they all regarded him; but the chief cause of the enmity of the emperor was the alliance which had been formed between Cœur-de-Lion and Tancred of Sicily. It will be remembered that at the time when the army of the Crusaders visited Sicily, Henry was preparing for a descent upon that kingdom, for the purpose of enforcing those claims to the throne which he held in right of his wife Constance, the heiress of William the Good. Soon after the departure of Richard from Messina (A.D. 1191), Henry appeared with a vast army before the walls of Naples, which city made a gallant defence against the invader. The emperor, although the immediate descendant of the great Frederic Barbarossa, was as deficient in military skill as in other manly qualities, and he saw his troops fall thickly around him, cut off by the fevers of that unaccustomed climate, without venturing to make a combined attack upon the city. At length he fell ill himself, and then he immediately raised the siege, and retreated. At the time when Cœur-de-Lion fell into his power, he was preparing for a second expedition to Italy, and the captivity of the English king afforded him greatly increased chances of success; for Richard was accustomed to adhere to his engagements, and it is probable that had he been in possession of his kingdom he would have interfered to prevent the destruction of his ally. It appears that after that shameful bargain by which the person of the royal prisoner was transferred to the custody of the emperor, the place of his confinement was kept carefully concealed, and was for many months a matter of speculation

not only in England, but in Germany. Before we follow further the fortunes of this adventurous king, it is necessary to go back to the period of his departure for the Holy Land, and to trace the course of events in England during his absence.

The popular feeling, which had been excited against the Jews at the time of Richard's coronation, and which he had done so little to repress, found vent in persecutions and massacres throughout the country. In those turbulent times there were among the people a certain number of lawless characters, who, ever eager for plunder, were doubly so when they could obtain it by means which were encouraged by their superiors, and permitted secretly, if not openly, by the clergy. To kill a Jew was regarded not only as no crime, but as a deed acceptable to God, and in England, as in Palestine, the pure and holy religion of peace was believed to give its sanction to acts of merciless bloodshed and plunder. In February, A.D. 1190, a number of Jews were butchered in the streets of Lynn in Norfolk, and immediately afterwards, as though by a preconcerted movement, similar bloody scenes were enacted at Norwich, Lincoln, St. Edmondsbury, Stamford, and York.

The massacre of York, which took place in March, A.D. 1190, was remarkable no less for the number of victims who were sacrificed, than for the circumstances of horror which attended it. At nightfall on the 16th of the month, a company of strangers, armed to the teeth, entered the city, and attacked the house of a rich Jew who had been killed in London at the coronation. His widow and children however still remained, and these the ruffians put to the sword; carrying off whatever property the house contained. On the following day the rest of the Jews in York, anticipating the fate which awaited them, appeared before the governor, and entreated permission to seek safety for themselves and their families within the walls of the castle. The request was granted, and the people of the persecuted race, to the number of not less than one thousand, men, women, and children, were received into the fortress, within whose strong walls they might hope to find shelter from their enemies. But for some reason or other the governor passed outside the gates, and returned attended by a great number of the populace. The Jews, whose misfortunes had made them suspicious, feared that they had been permitted to enter the castle only as into a slaughter-house, and refused to admit the governor, excusing their disobedience by their dread of the mob, who, it was evident, would enter with him if the drawbridge were lowered. The governor refused to listen to such an argument, reasonable as it was,

Longchamp, the Chancellor, arresting Hugh Pudsey, Bishop of Durham.

and whatever may have been his original intention he now gave orders to the rabble to attack the rebellious Israelites. The command was willingly obeyed, and the populace, whose numbers were continually increased by all the vagabonds and ruffians of the neighbourhood, laid siege to the castle, and made preparations for taking it by assault.

It is related that the governor became alarmed at the tumult he had raised, and that he recalled his order, and endeavoured to calm the excitement of the people; if so, his efforts were unsuccessful. Few things are easier than to rouse the passions of men—nothing more difficult than to quell them. The unhappy Jews heard the loud shouts of vengeance without the walls, and, foreseeing that they could make little or no defence against the force brought against them, they held a solemn council together, and prepared for death. One of their number, an old and learned rabbi, rose up and said,—"Men of Israel, the God of our fathers requires us to die for the law, as holy men have died in all ages. The enemies who wait for our blood are merciless; they not only kill—they torture. Let us, then, return into the hands of God the life which came from him; and die, without repining, by our own hands." The assembly listened silently, and bowed their heads in assent. They kindled a great fire, in which they burned whatever property could be so destroyed; and the gold and jewels which defied the power of the flames, they buried in the ground. Then, having attempted in vain to set fire to the castle itself, they fulfilled their dreadful resolution, and each man cut the throats of his wife and children. The old rabbi took the lead in this work of slaughter, and when it was ended, he set the example of self-destruction to his kinsmen, and stabbed himself to the heart. Within a few moments the bloody scene was over, and there remained only a few men who had shrunk from participating in its horrors, not, as it afterwards appeared, from the dictates of conscience, but of cowardice. They appeared next morning upon the walls, and with trembling accents told their tale to the mob outside, praying abjectly for life, and offering to forswear their religion and to become Christian. The mob accepted these terms, and agreed that they should be permitted to live; but immediately the gates were opened, every Jew within the castle was butchered where he stood, and thus the act of apostacy which he had committed availed nothing. The murderers then proceeded to the cathedral church, where the bonds of Christian debtors had been placed by the Jews, and the deeds were burnt together by a fire which was kindled in the nave of the church. Although the nobles and rich men took no active part in the massacre, there can be little doubt that the proceedings were instigated by them, since they alone could have been interested in the destruction of these securities.

Longchamp, bishop of Ely, the chancellor of the kingdom, expressed his indignation at the war of extermination which seemed to be commenced against the Jews. He proceeded to York with a body of troops, displaced the governor from his office, and laid a heavy fine upon the rich men of the city. It does not appear, however, that the punishment was in any degree proportioned to the crime, or that it fell upon the actual perpetrators. The men upon whom the fine was levied were probably innocent of the outrage, but Longchamp was in want of money to transmit to his royal master in Normandy, and he no doubt was glad of the pretext thus afforded him for obtaining it.

It has been already related that before the departure of Richard for the Holy Land, he had sold the chief justiciarship of the kingdom to Hugh Pudsey, bishop of Durham, whose authority he afterwards curtailed by appointing other justiciaries, among whom was William Longchamp, bishop of Ely. Longchamp, who also held the chancellorship, and the custody of the Tower of London, was the favourite of Richard, and he soon secured into his own hands the entire government of the country. The king, who had the greatest confidence in his loyalty and ability, issued letters patent, directing the people to obey him as their sovereign; and by the authority of the pope, the chancellor was also appointed legate of England and Ireland. Thus doubly armed with spiritual and temporal power, the rule of Longchamp was absolute throughout the kingdom.

Pudsey, however, had paid for the justiciarship, and was by no means disposed to see his privileges swept away without making an effort at resistance. He accordingly laid his complaints before the king, and Richard in reply sent him letters, authorising him to share with Longchamp the authority which was his due. Armed with these, Pudsey made his appearance in London with great ceremony, but the barons of the kingdom assembled there refused to permit him to take his seat among them. After having in vain insisted upon the king's authority which he carried with him, the discomfited bishop proceeded in search of the chancellor, who was still with his troops in the north. When the two prelates met, Longchamp approached his brother of Durham with a smiling countenance, and courteous demeanour; expressed himself ready to obey the commands of the king, and invited Pudsey to an entertainment on that day se'nnight in the castle of Tickhill. The bishop of Durham, who possessed either more good faith or less shrewdness than is usual with statesmen in that or any other age, accepted the invitation, and as soon as he had passed the gates of the castle, Longchamp placed his hand upon his shoulder and arrested him, saying that as sure as the king lived, the bishop should not leave that place until he had surrendered not only his claim to power but all the castles in his possession. "This," said he, "is not bishop arresting bishop, but chancellor arresting chancellor." Pudsey was accordingly imprisoned, and was not released until he had fulfilled the required conditions.

The power of Longchamp was now employed to the utmost to raise money for the king's necessities, and to further his own schemes of aggrandisement. Among the chroniclers are several who speak in strong terms of his avarice and tyranny, while there is only one* whose description of him is favourable. That one, however, was an impartial witness, and an authority whose words carry considerable weight. We are told that such was the rapacity of the chancellor that not a knight could keep his baldric, not a woman her bracelet, not a noble his ring, not a Jew his hoards of gold or merchandise.† He used his power to enrich his relations and friends, placing them in the highest and most profitable posts under government, and giving them the custody of towns and castles which he took from those who had previously held them. He passed through the country with all the pomp and parade of royalty, attended by

* Peter of Blois. † Matt Paris.

more than a thousand horsemen, and it is related that whenever he stopped to lodge for the night, a three years' income was not enough to defray the expenses of his train for a single day. His taste for luxury was further ministered to by minstrels and jugglers, whom he invited from France, and who sang their strains of flattery in the public places, proclaiming that the chancellor had not his like in the world.

There is an evident air of exaggeration about these statements, and many of them were to be referred to men as disaffected towards the king as towards his chancellor. If Longchamp reduced the country to poverty by his exactions, it is probable that he was impelled to obtain the money by the demands of Richard; we shall presently see, however, that the national wealth was by no means exhausted by the burdens—heavy as they were—which it sustained. The loyalty of Longchamp has never been doubted, and there is no reason to believe that his government was generally tyrannous or unjust.

The nobles viewed the increasing power of the chancellor with feelings of envy; and earl John, the brother of Richard, who had long entertained designs upon the throne, perceived that his chances of success were small indeed so long as a man devoted to the king retained the supreme power in the realm. Some of the turbulent barons, to whom Longchamp had given cause of offence, attached themselves to John, and encouraged him in his ambitious schemes. While Richard was in Sicily he received letters from his brother containing various accusations against the chancellor of tyranny and misgovernment. It appears that these letters produced their effect, and that the king sent a reply directing that, if the accusations were proved to be true, Walter, archbishop of Rouen, with Geoffrey Fitz-Peter and William Mareschal, should be appointed to the chief justiciarships, and that in any case they should be associated with Longchamp in the direction of affairs. Richard, however, was well aware of the treacherous disposition of his brother, and reflection satisfied him that the chancellor was more worthy of confidence than those who accused him. Before the departure of the fleet from Messina, the king sent letters to his subjects confirming the authority of Longchamp, and directing that implicit obedience should be rendered to him.

When John learnt that his brother was on his way to Acre, he took active measures for bringing his schemes into operation. Various disputes took place between him and the chancellor, and before long an occurrence took place which led to an open rupture between them. Gerald of Camville, a Norman baron, and one of the adherents of John, held the custody of Lincoln Castle, which he had purchased from the king. Longchamp—who, it is said, desired to give this office to one of his friends—summoned Camville to surrender the keys of the castle, but the baron refused compliance, saying that he was earl John's liegeman, and that he would not relinquish his possessions, except at the command of his lord. Longchamp then appeared before Lincoln with an army, and drove out Camville, who appealed to John for justice. The prince, who desired nothing better than such an opportunity, attacked the royal fortresses of Nottingham and Tickhill, carried them with little or no opposition, and, planting his standard on the walls, sent a messenger to Longchamp to the effect that, unless immediate restitution were made for the injury to Gerald of Camville, he would revenge it with a rod of iron. The chancellor, who possessed little courage or military talent, entered into a negotiation, by the terms of which the castles of Nottingham and Tickhill remained in the hands of John, and that of Lincoln was restored to Camville. Other of the royal castles, which had hitherto remained exclusively in the power of the chancellor, were committed into the custody of different barons, to be retained until the return of Richard from the Holy Land, or, in the event of his death, to be delivered up to John. It was well known that the king had appointed his young nephew Arthur as his heir, but the chancellor was now forced to set aside the commands of his royal master, and at a council of the kingdom the barons, headed by Longchamp, took the oath of fealty to John, acknowledging him heir to the crown in case the king died without issue.

These important concessions satisfied John only for a short time, and an opportunity soon presented itself for pushing his demands still further. Geoffrey, the son of Henry II. by fair Rosamond, had been appointed to the archbishopric of York during his father's lifetime, but his consecration had been delayed until the year 1191, when the necessary permission was received from the court of Rome, and he was consecrated by the archbishop of Tours. As soon as the ceremony was concluded, he prepared to take possession of his benefice, notwithstanding the oath which had been exacted from him, that he would not return to England. The chancellor having been apprised of his intention, sent a message to him forbidding him to cross the channel, and at the same time directed the sheriffs to arrest him should he attempt to land. Geoffrey despised the prohibition; and, having landed at Dover in disguise, took shelter in a monastery. His retreat was soon discovered, and the soldiers of the king broke into the church and seized the archbishop at the foot of the altar, while he was engaged in the celebration of the mass. A good deal of unnecessary violence seems to have been used, and Geoffrey was dragged through the streets to Dover Castle, where he was imprisoned.

The peculiar circumstances of this arrest, and the indignity thus inflicted upon a prelate of the church, excited the popular feeling strongly against the government, and John, satisfied that he would be supported by the people, openly espoused the cause of his half-brother, and peremptorily ordered the chancellor to release him. Longchamp dared not resist the popular voice; he asserted that he had given no orders for the violence which had been used, and directed that the archbishop should be set at liberty, and suffered to go to London. An alliance, whose basis seems to have been self-interest rather than mutual esteem, was formed between the two half-brothers, and John, supported by the archbishop of Rouen, boldly proceeded to London, summoned the great council of the barons of the kingdom, and called upon the chancellor to appear before it and defend his conduct. Longchamp not only refused to do so, but forbade the barons to assemble, declaring that the object of John was to usurp the crown. The council, however, was held at London bridge on the Thames, and the barons summoned Longchamp, who was then at Windsor Castle, to appear before them. The chancellor, on the contrary, collected all the men-at-arms who were with him, and marched from Windsor to London; but the

adherents of John, who met him at the gates, attacked and defeated his escort, and finding himself also opposed by the citizens he was compelled to take refuge in the Tower.

Immediately afterwards John entered the city, and, on his promising to remain faithful to the king, was received with welcome. The people, though they were willing to join in deposing the chancellor, retained almost without exception the utmost loyalty to their brave sovereign, and they showed clearly that they would permit of no treason against his authority. The act contemplated by the barons involved very important consequences, and John, with the craft and caution peculiar to his character, determined to obtain the assent of the citizens of London, and thus to involve them in a portion of its responsibility. The suffrages of the people were taken in a manner which shows at once the rudeness of the times, and the unusual nature of such a proceeding. On the day fixed for the great assembly of the barons, the tocsin, or alarm bell, was rung, and when the citizens poured forth from their houses they found heralds posted in the streets, who directed them to St. Paul's church. When the people arrived there in a crowd, they found the chief men of the realm—barons and prelates—seated in council. These haughty nobles, chiefly of Norman descent, whose usual custom had been to treat the native English as mere serfs and inferior beings, now received the people with extraordinary courtesy, and invited them to take part in the proceedings. The debate which followed, being conducted in Norman-French, must have been unintelligible to the majority of the citizens; but they were shown the king's seal affixed to a letter, which was said to authorise the deposition of the chancellor in case he failed to conduct properly the duties of his office. When this letter had been read, the votes of the whole assembly were taken, and it was decreed by the voice of "the bishops, earls, and barons of the kingdom, and of the citizens of London," that the chancellor should be deprived of his office, and that John, the brother of the king, should be proclaimed "chief governor of the whole kingdom."

On the news of these transactions being conveyed to Longchamp, it is reported that he fell upon the floor insen-

Richard Cœur-de-Lion before the Diet of the German Empire. (See page 237.)

sible. It was evident that he had no longer any power to resist the pretensions of John: resistance, to have been of any avail, should have come sooner. The troops of his opponents having surrounded the Tower, the chancellor came out from the gates and offered to surrender. John, who thought it worth while to buy his adhesion, or submission, to the new authority, proposed to leave him in possession of the bishopric of Ely, and to give him the custody of three castles belonging to the crown. To the honour of Longchamp, he refused to accept gifts from such a source, or to resign of his own free will any of the powers entrusted to him by his sovereign. "I submit," he said, "only to the superior force which is brought against me." And with these words he gave the keys of the Tower into

the hands of John. The barons, however, compelled him to take an oath that he would surrender the keys of the other royal fortresses, and his two brothers were detained as hostages for the performance of these conditions.

John kneeling for forgiveness before his brother Richard. (See page 239)

The ex-chancellor himself was permitted to go at large; and it appears that he determined, rather than resign possession of the castles, to leave his brothers in danger, and to escape to Normandy. Having reached Canterbury, he stayed there for a few days, and then quitted the town in the disguise of a hawking-woman, having a bale of linen under his arm, and a yard-measure in his hand. In this strange costume, the ex-chancellor, who had been accustomed to travel with a retinue of a thousand men-at-arms, took his way on foot to the sea-shore. Having to wait awhile for a vessel in which to embark, he sat down upon a stone, with his veil, or hood, drawn over his face. Some

fishermen's wives who were passing by stopped and asked him the price of his cloth, but as he did not understand a word of English, he made no answer, much to the surprise of his questioners. Presently some other women came up to him, who also took an interest in his merchandise, and desired to know how he sold it. The prelate, who seems to have been keenly alive to the ludicrousness of his situation, burst out into a loud laugh, which stimulated the curiosity of the women, and they suddenly lifted his veil. Seeing under it "the dark and newly-shaven face of a man,"* they ran away in surprise and alarm, and soon brought back with them a number of men and women, who amused themselves by pulling the clothes of this strange person, and rolling him in the shingles. At length, after the ex-chancellor had tried in vain to make them understand who he was, they shut him up in a cellar, and he was compelled to make himself known to the authorities, as the only way of regaining his liberty. He then gave up the keys of the royal castles, and was permitted to proceed to the Continent.

Immediately on his arrival in Normandy, Longchamp wrote those letters to Richard which reached him in the Holy Land, and apprised him of the unsettled condition of affairs in England, and of the dangerous assumption of power on the part of John. That prince had appointed the archbishop of Rouen to the chief justiciarship of the kingdom; but it would appear that the new justiciary was too honest a man to assent to all the views of his unprincipled master; and John, being in want of money, entered into a negotiation with Longchamp to replace him in his office for a payment of £700. The chief ministers, however, dreaded the consequences which might follow the return of the ex-chancellor to power; and they agreed to lend John a sum of £500 from the treasury, to induce him to withdraw his proposal. The mercenary prince consented to do so, and the negotiation was broken off.

In defiance of the solemn oath which Philip had taken before leaving the Holy Land, he no sooner returned to France than he prepared to invade Normandy. Some of the nobles of his kingdom, however, had more regard for their knightly faith, and they refused to join in the expedition; while the pope, determined to defend the cause of a king who was so nobly fighting the battle of the faith, threatened Philip with the ban of the church if he persisted in his treasonous intention. Compelled to abandon this expedition, Philip by no means gave up his designs against Richard, and he entered into a treaty with John, by which he promised to secure to him the possession of Normandy, Aquitaine, and Anjou, and to assist him in his attempts upon the English throne. In return he merely asked that John should marry the princess Alice, Philip's sister.

To this match John, who probably might have been willing to promise anything that was required of him, did not hesitate to give his consent, in spite of the sinister rumours which were current about the princess, and the fact that she had been affianced to his brother.

CHAPTER XLIX.

Reign of Richard I. continued—Richard in Prison—His Ransom and Return to England—Reconciliation between Richard and John—Career of Longbeard—Wars on the Continent—Death of Richard.

THE condition of affairs in England at the time of Richard's departure from Palestine, has been related in the last chapter. The war-like deeds of Cœur-de-Lion had been sung by the troubadours throughout the country, and were the theme of those tales of wonder with which the palmer from the Holy Land repaid his entertainers for the hospitality of a night. The people listened with pride to narratives coloured with all the hues of imagination; and their admiration of the personal valour of their king—in those days esteemed the highest virtue—was mingled with the religious sentiment, which led them to exult in the confusion of the infidel. When it was known that Richard had set sail to return to England, the news was received with a general rejoicing throughout the country. The people were tired of the quarrels of regents and ministers; and the welcome which they prepared to give their sovereign was in some degree inspired by the hope that his powerful rule would ensure tranquillity to the realm.

As time passed on, and the king still remained absent, strange rumours began to get abroad. It was affirmed that he had been driven on to the coast of Barbary, and taken prisoner by the Moors; that, like Robert of Normandy, he had been tempted to stay for a while among the groves of Italy; that the ship which carried him had foundered at sea with all on board. The last story, however, found few believers, for the people, imbued with a tinge of that romance which taught the immortality of the hero, were fully convinced that their king was still alive, and would some day return to take possession of the throne. At length it became known that Cœur-de-Lion was in imprisonment in one of the castles of Germany. The news was first conveyed in a letter from the emperor Henry to king Philip, and quickly travelled over Europe. To the revengeful and ungenerous king of France that letter brought more joy than a present of gold and topaz; but the other nations of Christendom received the tidings with indignation and disgust. The pope instantly excommunicated the duke of Austria, and sent a message to the emperor Henry, to the effect that he too should be placed under the curse of Rome unless the royal prisoner were instantly released. The archbishop of Rouen proved his loyalty by summoning the council of the kingdom, and sending two abbots into Germany, to visit the king and confer with him on the measures to be taken for his liberation. Longchamp, however, had already departed in search of his master, and was the first who obtained an interview with him.

There is a beautiful legend, much better known than the authenticated facts, which tells of a minstrel, named Blondel, who had been attached to the person of Richard, and whose love for his master induced him to travel through Germany for the purpose of discovering the place of his confinement. Whenever he came to a castle the minstrel placed himself under the walls, and sang a song which had been a favourite with Cœur-de-Lion. One day, when the king was whiling away the dreary hours in solitude, he heard the sound of a harp beneath his window, and when the well known strains floated up to his ears, he joined in the air, and sang the concluding verse of the song. Blondel immediately recognised the voice, and thus the place of Cœur-de-Lion's imprisonment became known to his countrymen. Such is the story, which has been generally rejected by the historians for want of evidence. There is considerable improbability in the legend, but it is not impossible that it may have had a foundation in fact. It has been argued that Richard's imprisonment was related in the letter of the emperor to Philip, and that therefore there

* Roger of Hoveden.

was no need for the journey of Blondel; but although the locality of the king's prison was indicated in this letter, it by no means follows that it was known to Longchamp and others who first took steps to visit him.

The sanguine temper of Cœur-de-Lion supported him even in the gloom of a prison. Like many other famous knights of his day, he was something of a poet, and he spent his time in singing the songs of the troubadours, and in composing verses of his own. Of these, one short poem has been preserved,* in which he complains of being forgotten by those friends who well knew that, had his case been theirs, he would not have failed them in their hour of need. Such a feeling, however, was not exhibited until he had worn away many months of captivity, during which he won the hearts of his jailors by his jovial manners, and gaiety of spirit. When at length Longchamp obtained admission into his prison, Richard received him as a friend, and appears to have entirely forgiven that weakness and lack of energy on the part of the chancellor which had proved so favourable to the traitorous designs of prince John.

Longchamp exerted himself in his master's favour with the emperor Henry, and that prince at length consented that Richard should appear before the diet at Hagenau. When the king was on his way thither, he was met by the two abbots who had been sent by the archbishop of Rouen. "Unbroken by distress," Cœur-de-Lion received them with a smiling countenance, and the admiration of all the bystanders was attracted by his undaunted bearing, which was rather that of a conqueror than a prisoner. Within a few days afterwards he appeared before the diet of the empire, where he was permitted to offer his defence against the accusations of Henry. These were—That he had entered into an alliance with Tancred, the usurper of the crown of Sicily; that he had unjustly imprisoned the Christian ruler of Cyprus; that he had insulted the duke of Austria; and that he was guilty of the murder of Conrad of Montferrat. It was also alleged that the truce he had entered into with Saladin was disgraceful, and that he had left Jerusalem in the hands of the infidels. The speech of Richard in reply to these charges has not been preserved; but it is described by contemporary writers as having been full of manly eloquence, and that its effect upon the assembly was entirely to establish in their minds the conviction of his innocence. The emperor, however, was by no means disposed to set his prisoner at liberty, and insisted upon a heavy ransom, which was subsequently raised to the large sum of 100,000 marks. It was also stipulated that Richard should give hostages to the emperor and the duke of Austria for the further payment of 50,000 marks, which was to be made under certain conditions; and that Eleanor, the maid of Brittany, sister to prince Arthur and niece of Richard, should be affianced to the son of Leopold. It is related by Hoveden that Richard did homage to the emperor for the crown of England. This act of vassalage, if it really took place, was but an acknowledgment of the pretensions of the ancient emperors of Germany to the feudal superiority of Europe as heirs of the Roman Cæsars. It is probable, however, that there is some mistake here, and that the act of homage referred to the imaginary crown of Provence, or Arles, which Henry at this time conferred upon his prisoner.

* Poesies des Troubadours.

The negotiations respecting the ransom of Richard occupied many months, during which time he remained in captivity, and his brother John, together with Philip of France, were doing all in their power to keep him there. These confederates made the disgraceful proposal to pay the emperor a sum equal to the ransom, provided he would break off his engagement with Cœur-de-Lion, and consign him to perpetual imprisonment. The emperor would have been willing enough to do so; but there were men of honour among the German barons, and when he laid the proposal of Philip before the diet, that assembly instantly rejected it, and their firm demeanour compelled the faithless prince to adhere to his agreement.

When the first news of Richard's imprisonment reached England, John collected a body of troops, and took possession of the castles of Windsor and Wallingford. Thence he marched to London, causing it to be proclaimed wherever he went that the king his brother had died in prison. The people refused to believe this report, and when John required the barons of England and Normandy to acknowledge him as their sovereign, they answered by raising the standard of Cœur-de-Lion. The troops of John were attacked and put to flight, and the prince himself passed across the Channel, and joined his ally, Philip of France. Philip then entered Normandy with a large army, but there, as in England, the people remained loyal to their sovereign, and the French king was compelled to retreat with heavy loss.

The ransom of Richard, which was obtained almost wholly in England, appears to have been raised with great difficulty. The officers of the crown went through the country, compelling men of all ranks to contribute, making no distinction between clergy and laity, Saxons or Normans. The plate of the churches and monasteries was melted down into coin and bullion, and the Cistercian monks, whose poverty had usually exempted them from such exactions, were forced to give up the wool of their sheep. Frauds were practised to a considerable extent by the officers, who exacted money for their own use under the pretence of applying it to the king's ransom; and thus the burdens of the people increased to such an extent that they were said to be in distress from sea to sea.

At length, after much delay, the sum of seventy thousand marks was raised and sent to the emperor, who paid over one-third of the sum to the duke of Austria, as his share of the booty. It was then agreed that Richard should be set at liberty, on condition of his leaving hostages for the payment of the sum in arrear. The king, whose captivity had now endured for thirteen months, was disposed to agree to almost any terms that might be demanded of him, and the hostages having been obtained, he was released about the end of January, A.D. 1194.

Free once more, Cœur-de-Lion took his way towards Antwerp, receiving as he went the highest marks of honour, which seemed to be paid rather to the man than the monarch. Force of character, when combined with grace of manners, is irresistible in winning hearts; the one Richard certainly possessed, and the other we have reason to believe was not wanting. Probably, the demeanour of the Lion Heart did not display much polish—as little of the tinsel gallantry of Charles II. as of the forced flexibility of the fourth George; but he was affable and friendly to his friends, and, when his passions were not excited, courteous to all who came into his presence.

Attended by a few followers, Richard embarked at Antwerp in a small vessel, and landed at Sandwich, on the 13th March, 1194. The English people had paid dearly for his freedom; but he seemed to have become more endeared to them on that account. Impulsive and enthusiastic then as now, they crowded about him with uproarious welcome, and accompanied him on his way to London with shouts of rejoicing. The injuries inflicted by the Norman conquest were beginning to disappear from their minds; and though Cœur-de-Lion could not speak their language, he was their king; and his exploits were a national honour. London, at least, was not impoverished by the sums raised for his ransom. So magnificent was the reception given by the citizens—such stores of plate, and jewels, and cloth of gold were displayed, to do honour to the occasion—that one of the German barons who went with him expressed his astonishment at the sight, and said that if the emperor his master had known the wealth of the country, he would not have let his prisoner off so easily. At the moment when Richard entered London, bells were ringing at the churches, tapers were lit, and at every altar in the city sentence of excommunication was pronounced, by order of the bishops, against prince John and his adherents.

John himself had received timely notice of the release of Richard, by a letter which reached him from Philip, containing the significant words, "Take care of yourself, the devil is broken loose," and the prince immediately sought safety in flight. From a council held at Nottingham, the barons summoned him to appear within forty days, on pain of the forfeiture of all his estates; they also determined that Richard should be crowned a second time, and though the king was opposed to this extraordinary proceeding, he submitted to a decision which was evidently dictated by loyalty. The ceremony was performed at Winchester, on Easter day following.

From Nottingham Richard proceeded on a journey of pleasure through Sherwood forest, which extended over a space of several hundred miles, to the centre of the county of York.* "He had never seen this forest," says Roger of Hoveden, "and it pleased him greatly." There, through quiet glades and grassy lawns, "under the greenwood tree" the king solaced himself for his long imprisonment, and tasted the sweet breath of liberty. Sensuous enjoyment is born of privation, and means nothing more than a want supplied. In every age, to him who has been long a captive, the free air and the cheerful face of nature have a charm to which no other can compare, and Cœur-de-Lion, a knight-errant, and something of a poet by nature, was not likely to be insensible to its influence. The forest of Sherwood was remarkable for picturesque beauty; throughout its vast extent there were pleasant valleys, whose undulating slopes were covered with the varied foliage peculiar to our island; tall oaks grew there luxuriantly, stately memorials of the past, which for a thousand years had cast their shade on Dane and Druid, Saxon and Norman; game abounded in the covers for those who chose to seek it; many a mossy couch, with its leafy canopy, invited to repose. Apart from its natural advantages, the place had other attractions to the adventurous spirit of Cœur-de-Lion. Sherwood forest had long been the retreat of bands of armed Saxons, who still defied the Norman power, and chose rather to live as outlaws than submit to the authority of foreigners. Driven by the Normans from the inhabited parts of the country, they found a refuge in the groves of Sherwood, where they collected together under a chief who directed a sort of military government. They supported themselves by the chase and by plunder, killing the king's venison without stint, and making incursions whenever an opportunity offered upon the lands of the neighbouring barons.

At the time when the famous Cœur-de-Lion visited Sherwood, there lived within its recesses a man whom the Anglo-Saxon people regarded as their hero, and whose name has been handed down to us in so many tales and poems, that there is some danger of our confounding him with the fabled heroes of romance. "At this time arose among the outlaws that most famous freebooter, Robert Hode, whom the common people celebrate in their comedies and festivals, and whose exploits related by the mimes, and minstrels, delight them greatly."* Little is really known with certainty about Robin Hood, but, as far as can be gathered from the ancient ballads, he owed his position as chief of the marauders to superior intelligence as well as valour. He was a Saxon by birth, and of no higher rank than that of a peasant; the stories which relate that he had been earl of Huntingdon, or was descended from an earl, being at variance with the older narratives. Among the former is a beautiful romance, which would make him out to be the very child of the woods, born there "among flowering lilies." However this may be, it is certain that he passed his life in the forest, with a band of several hundred archers, who became the terror of all the rich lords, bishops, and abbots in the neighbourhood, especially those of Norman birth. Robin Hood made war upon the rich, but he respected the persons of his own countrymen, and never molested or robbed the poor. The numerous ballads which relate this trait in his character, are in their very existence a proof of what they assert, for no man could have been made the theme of such general eulogium unless he had been much beloved by the people. Little John, the lieutenant of Robin Hood, is scarcely less celebrated than his chief, whose constant companion he was in all his dangers or pleasures. Little John appears to have possessed a skill in archery second only to that of Robin himself, of which so many incredible stories are told by the romancers. There is also a third person mentioned by tradition,—one Friar Tuck, who thought fit to retain his gown while every other sign of his former calling had disappeared. These were the most noted among Robin Hood's band,—a very merry company, if we may believe the story-tellers, leading a careless, gipsy life, doing a great deal of harm, no doubt, but presenting, on the whole, a favourable contrast to the cruelty and tyranny of their Norman oppressors.

On the return of king Richard to London, and immediately after his second coronation, he commenced preparations for a war in France, which he proposed to undertake in revenge for the injuries he had sustained at the hands of Philip. For this purpose, as well as for his own necessities, money was required, and Richard showed no scruple as to the means by which it was obtained. He at once annulled the sales of royal estates which he had made before his departure for the Holy Land, declaring that they had not

* The Saxon name of this forest was *Sire-wode*, afterwards altered into that of *Sherwood*.

* Johan. de Fordun. Scotichron.

been sold, but mortgaged, and that the crown was entitled to their restitution; many high appointments were also resumed in the same manner, and these, as well as the lands, were again sold to the highest bidder.

Impatient to take the field, Richard collected as many troops as could be got together, and passed over into Normandy in May, A.D. 1194. He landed at Barfleur, and as soon as he had set foot upon the beach he was met by his cowardly brother John, who cowered at his feet and begged forgiveness. His mother, queen Eleanor, seconded the request with her prayers; and Richard on this occasion showed a magnanimity which was rare indeed in those days. He granted his brother's pardon, and said, "I forgive him; and I hope to forget his injuries as easily as he will forget my pardon." The prince who thus knelt trembling on the beach at Barfleur, had just been guilty of a most foul and treacherous murder. Regardless of the oath he had taken, he determined to desert the cause of Philip, whom he feared less than his brother; before doing so he invited the officers of the garrison placed by the French king at Evreux to an entertainment, and massacred them all without mercy.

The expedition of Richard, hastily undertaken, was attended with only partial success. The French troops were beaten in several engagements, and several towns and castles of Normandy which had been occupied by them, were retaken by Cœur-de-Lion; but his finances were soon exhausted, and the people of Aquitaine broke out into insurrection against him. The campaign came to an end in July by a truce for one year.

While Richard was absent on the Continent, the government of England was confided to Hubert Walter, archbishop of Canterbury, who was appointed chief justiciary of the kingdom (A.D. 1195). As bishop of Salisbury he had accompanied the king to Palestine, and had there shown great courage and ability, as well in the field of battle as in his interview with Saladin. Cœur-de-Lion knew both how to appreciate and reward the ability shown in his service; great men seldom choose bad instruments, and the new justiciary proved himself fully worthy of the trust reposed in him. Under his administration the country began to recover from its depressed condition, although the constant demands for money made by the king rendered it difficult to relax, in any great degree, the burdens of the people. Hubert, however, appears to have promoted their well-being to the utmost of his power; the taxes were raised with as little violence as possible; commerce was fostered, and justice equitably administered in the courts of law.

It was not long before two of the bitterest enemies of Richard were struck down by death. Leopold, duke of Austria, was engaged in a tournament, when his horse fell upon him, and crushed his foot. The wound mortified; and when he was told that death was approaching, great terror seized him, for he was still under the sentence of excommunication, in whose force he firmly believed. In this temper of mind, he ordered the hostages of the English king to be set free, and the money he had received from him to be returned. It does not appear, however, that the restitution was made; for an old traveller, quoted by Mills,* who passed through Germany towards the close of the seventeenth century, says that the money "beautified Vienna; and the two walls round the city, the one old and inward, little considerable at present, were built with the ransom of Richard I."

Tancred, king of Sicily, had died in 1193, and was succeeded by his young son William. As soon as the emperor Henry had received the ransom of Richard, he expended it in preparations for a second descent on Italy. In 1195, while Cœur-de-Lion was busily engaged in the war with the French king, Henry marched a vast army into the Sicilian dominions. The people submitted to him by a treaty, the provisions of which he swore to maintain; but he violated his oath with the most barefaced treachery, committed unheard-of cruelties upon the Sicilian nobles, and put out the eyes of the young king, the son of Tancred. The perfidious emperor having returned to his own country laden with spoils, collected a still larger army than before, and again marched into Italy. But in this expedition so abominable were the deeds committed by his orders, that even his wife Constance turned against him, and took the side of her oppressed countrymen. The incensed Sicilians attacked him with the energy of despair, and he was compelled to seek terms of peace, which he had no sooner obtained than death put an end to his career of cruelty. Like Leopold, he died in the agonies of a fear which is sometimes called repentance, and ordered that the ransom of Richard should be restored to him; but, as might be expected, the command was evaded by his successor to the throne.

Before the truce between Richard and Philip had expired, war again broke out, and continued without any important advantage to either side, until the end of the year, when a temporary peace was once more concluded. The citizens of London had for some time complained of the unequal manner in which the taxes were levied, the poor being made to pay much more, in proportion to their means, than the rich. In the year 1195, the movement took a new form, headed by a man named William Fitz-Osbert, called "Longbeard," from the length of the beard which he wore, to make himself look like a true Saxon. His first act, which showed no sign of disloyalty, was to visit Richard in Normandy, and lay before him the grievance of which the people complained. The king made a courteous reply, and promised that the matter should be inquired into. Months passed away, however, without any redress being obtained, and, in 1196, Longbeard formed a secret association, which was said to number 52,000 persons, all of whom swore to obey the "saviour of the poor," as he was called. Frequent assemblies of the citizens took place at St. Paul's-cross, where their leader delivered political orations, couched in obscure language, and usually prefaced by some text from scripture. The passions of the people were becoming daily more excited, and it was evident that these meetings could not go on without danger to the public peace. Longbeard was summoned to appear before a council composed of the barons and higher ecclesiastics, where the strange accusation was brought against him that he had excited among the lower classes of the people the love of liberty and happiness. He attended the council, but so large a concourse of his adherents escorted him there, that it was not considered prudent to take proceedings against him. Great efforts were made to counteract the effects of his teaching, and the archbishop of Canterbury, whose virtues were recognised and respected by all classes, went personally among the poorest of the citizens, and prevailed

* Hist. of the Crusades, vol. ii., p. 79.

upon many of them to give their promise to keep the peace, and to deliver their children into his hands as hostages for their good faith. Two citizens now presented themselves to the council, and, since it was dangerous to arrest Longbeard openly, offered to take him by surprise. The offer was accepted, and these men were employed to dog his footsteps, and watch an opportunity of seizing him. At length they found him with only a few companions, and having called to their assistance some armed men whom they had in readiness, they advanced and laid hands upon him. man to the tail of a horse, and dragged him in this manner to the Tower of London, whence, by sentence of the chief justiciary, he was taken to West Smithfield and was there hung, together with his companions.

During this cruel torture of their leader the citizens remained passive, making no attempt to rescue him; and yet no sooner was he dead, than they proclaimed him to be a saint and a martyr, and cut up the gibbet on which he was hung into relics, which were preserved with a religious veneration. The fame of the "King of the Poor" had

The Death of Longbeard.

Longbeard immediately drew a knife and stabbed one of them to the heart; then with his companions he effected his escape to the church of St. Mary of Arches, in the tower of which he barricaded himself. Here for several days he maintained his position, but at length the tower was set on fire, and Longbeard and his friends were driven out by the flames. They were immediately seized and bound, but at that moment a youth, the son of the citizen who was killed, approached Longbeard, and plunged a knife into his bowels. The wound did not cause death, and the soldiers—to whom pity would seem to have been unknown—tied the wounded travelled far and wide, and the peasantry from remote parts of the kingdom made pilgrimages to Smithfield, in the belief that miracles would be wrought on the spot where he fell. So great was the popular enthusiasm that it became necessary to maintain a guard of soldiers on the spot, and some of the more troublesome pilgrims were imprisoned and scourged. Even these severe measures were only successful after a considerable lapse of time, so enthusiastic were the people in their attachment to the memory of one whom they believed had died in their cause, but whom in his death-agony they raised no arm to save.

In the year 1197, hostilities again commenced between Richard and Philip, the latter of whom derived support from the disaffection of the English king's continental subjects. The people of Brittany—ever impetuous and eager for liberty—joined the standard of Philip, or fought separately against his enemy, without reflecting that their efforts, if successful, would tend only to a change of masters, and not to establishing their independence. The war continued in a desultory manner, fortune leaning now to this side, now to that; but wherever Cœur-de-Lion showed himself in person, he maintained his reputation, and overcame his opponents. The king ultimately secured the adherence of the earl of Toulouse, by giving him the hand of his sister Joan, the queen-dowager of Sicily, who, with the queen Berengaria, had returned to Aquitaine.

In this campaign the bishop of Beauvais, a powerful

Richard Cœur-de-Lion receiving his death-wound before the Castle of Chaluz.

men of Aquitaine had risen in insurrection, headed by the same Bertrand of Born who had formerly excited Richard to rebellion against his father, and who now, by his old expedients of biting satires and lampoons, occupied himself in fomenting dissensions between his former ally and Philip. The earl of Flanders in the north, and the earl of Toulouse in the south, simultaneously declared war against Richard and raised large bodies of troops in their territories. The prelate, who had evinced great enmity to Richard, was captured by Marchadee, a captain of the Brabanters in the king's service. He was taken in complete armour, fighting sword in hand, contrary to the canons of the church. By direction of Richard he was consigned to a dungeon in the castle of Rouen. Two of his priests presented themselves before the king, to beg that their bishop might no longer be subjected to such harsh treatment.

Richard replied that they themselves should judge if he deserved it. "This man," said he, "has done me many wrongs, one of which is not to be forgotten. When I was a prisoner, in the hands of the emperor, and when, in consideration of my royal birth, they began to treat me with some little respect, your master arrived and used his influence to my injury. He spoke to the emperor over night, and the next morning I was made to wear a chain such as a horse could hardly bear. Say, now, what he merits at my hands, and answer justly." The priests are said to have made no reply, and quitted the royal presence. Efforts were then made in a more influential quarter on behalf of the bishop. He appealed to pope Celestine, who replied that in such a case he could not use his pontifical authority, but would address his request to Richard as a friend. He did so, and sent the king a letter, in which he implored mercy for his "dear son, the bishop of Beauvais." Richard replied by sending to the pope the bishop's coat of mail, which was covered with blood, and attaching to it a scroll containing the following verse from the Old Testament:—"This have we found: know now whether it be thy son's coat or no?" Celestine, who appears to have relished the joke, replied, "No; it is the coat of a son of Mars; let Mars deliver him if he can." On this occasion Richard proved implacable; he refused the large sum of 10,000 marks which were offered as a ransom; and until the king's death the bishop of Beauvais remained in the dungeon in chains.

In the following year (A.D. 1198) the truce again expired, and war broke out once more, and for the last time, between the two kings. The prolonged contest seemed to have increased their hatred, and led them to wreak their vengeance upon their unhappy prisoners who fell into their hands. Great cruelties were practised by both armies, who, as they passed through their enemy's territory, burned up the homesteads of the people and laid waste the fields. A pitched battle took place near Gisors, in which Richard obtained a complete victory, and Philip, in his retreat, had a narrow escape from drowning in the river Epte, the bridge over which he crossed breaking down under the weight of his troops. Richard then exclaimed, exultingly, that he had made the French king drink deeply of the waters of the Epte. During the engagement Cœur-de-Lion exhibited all his old prowess. It is related that he rode unattended against three knights, whom he struck down one after the other and made prisoners. This was Cœur-de-Lion's last exploit in the field. A truce was declared between the obstinate belligerents, and was solemnly ratified for the term of five years. In those times an oath of truce or a kingly pledge was little else than a ceremony, and passion or self-interest continually broke down the most solemn vows and attestations. Thus the truce for five years was infringed in as many weeks; but the difference was a trivial one, and was concluded without further hostilities. Richard then marched a body of troops against the insurgents of Aquitaine.

For some time previously the minstrels of the south had been heard to introduce among their love songs a ballad of more gloomy portent. This ballad contained a prophecy that in Limousin an arrow was making by which the tyrant king of England should die. Such proved to be, indeed, the manner of Richard's death, and the previous existence of the prophecy would seem to indicate a conspiracy to assassinate him. These were the men who, as already related, had attempted the life of Henry II., by shooting arrows at him; and it is not improbable that they should have determined among themselves to get rid of his son in the same manner. The circumstances of Richard's death, however, seem to have had no connection with such a conspiracy; it was provoked by his own spirit of revenge, and by the reckless indifference with which he exposed himself to danger. The story most commonly received is to the following effect:—Vidomar, the viscount of Limoges, had found a considerable treasure, which Richard, as his feudal lord, demanded. The viscount offered one half, and no more; and the king, who wanted money, and seldom listened to argument in such cases, besieged the rebellious noble in his castle of Chaluz. Famine soon appeared among the garrison, and they sent to the king to tender their submission, on the condition only that their lives might be spared. Richard refused the request, and swore he would storm the castle and hang the whole garrison on the battlements. The unhappy men of Chaluz had received this reply, which seemed to cut them off from hope, and they were consulting together with despairing looks, when they observed the king, attended by Marchadee, approaching the castle walls to reconnoitre and determine where the attack should be made. A youth named Bertrand de Gurdun, who stood upon the ramparts, then took a bow, and directing an arrow at the king, lodged it in his left shoulder. The castle was then carried by assault, and the whole of the garrison were massacred except Bertrand, who was led into the presence of Richard, to learn that more horrible fate which it was supposed would await him. Meanwhile, the arrow-head had been extracted with great difficulty by the surgeon, and it was evident that the wound would prove mortal. In the presence of death none but the most depraved minds retain their animosities; and the dying king looked calmly on his murderer, while the youth, for his part, bore an undaunted brow. "What have I done to thee," Cœur-de-Lion said, "that thou shouldst seek my life?" The youth answered, "Thou hast killed with thine own hand my father and my two brothers, and myself thou wouldst hang. Let me die in torture if thou wilt; I care not, so that thou, the tyrant, diest with me." Such a speech found an echo in the breast of him of the Lion-Heart: "Youth," he said, "I forgive thee. Let him go free, and give him a hundred shillings." The command was not obeyed, for it is related that Marchadee retained the prisoner, and after the king's death caused him to be flayed alive, and then to be hung. Like others of the princes his contemporaries, Richard expressed contrition and remorse at the prospect of death, and in his last moments courted the offices of the church. He died on the 6th of April, 1199, at the age of forty-two, having reigned, or rather worn the crown, for nearly ten years; during which, with the exception of a few months, he was absent from England. He had no children to succeed to the throne, and he left a will, in which he appointed his successor, and gave directions as to the disposal of his remains. "Take my heart," he said, "to Rouen, and let my body lie at my father's feet in the abbey of Fontevrault."

Richard Cœur-de-Lion appears to us as the type of manhood unfettered by a high civilisation. A strong, passionate heart, with great capacities for good or evil, placed above the control of ordinary circumstances, little influenced by

the power of religion, and therefore left in a great measure to its native impulses. Richard was revengeful, but not implacable; passionate, but not vindictive. The story of his life, like that of other kings of the Plantagenet race, cannot be written without the record of many acts of cruelty, which there is little to excuse or palliate. If he wanted money he seized it wherever it was to be had, with or without a pretext; if a man opposed him, he crushed him down or hanged him, and showed no scruple. When on his return from captivity the garrison of Nottingham held out against his troops, doubting the report of his return, it was not until the prisoners taken by the besiegers were hung up before the castle walls that the rebels became convinced of their error, and that the king was really there. Absolute power* is unfitted for human nature; and since the beginning of the world no man has ever wielded it without blame. But if Cœur-de-Lion was not free from the crimes belonging to his age and kingly position, he surpassed his contemporaries as much in nobility of character as in bodily strength and valour. His courage was of the highest order; for it combined not only the dash and gallantry common to men whose physical organisation is perfect, and who are incited by the love of military fame, but also that calmer, but not less admirable, quality of fortitude, which sustains the heart of the prisoner in chains, or of the soldier in time of famine and disease. The business of his life was war, and its recreation the tournament or the chase. Then, if ever, were the days of chivalry as they are depicted by the poets; stormy and perilous days, when the pulse of life beat high, and there was enough of intellectual culture to show men how to use their passions, but not to restrain them.

Effigies of Richard I. and Berengaria, from the Tomb at Fontevrault.

It has been said by a modern historian that the character of Richard was described by the Normans in one word, when they called him *Cœur-de-Lion*, or The Lion-Heart, but that the tiger might with more fitness have been taken as his prototype. Such an opinion does not appear to be warranted by the facts. To say that Richard was guilty of

* We say absolute power because at that time the royal prerogative was really without limit.

acts which we now stamp as cruel and tyrannous, is but to say that he was possessed of power, and lived in the twelfth century; but to intimate that his whole life was a course of such acts, is to violate historical justice. This terrible warrior-king had his moments of gentleness, and more than once displayed a magnanimity which, under all the circumstances, must excite our high admiration. If he was false to his wife, as appears to have been the case, his vices of that kind were less conspicuous than those of his predecessors. If he struck down his enemies without pity, he at least used no treachery for that purpose. Whatever he did he dared to do openly, and would have disdained to use intrigues like those which disgraced the sovereigns of France and Germany. Without searching the records of his reign for isolated instances of virtue, we may believe that many noble qualities must have been possessed by the man who could attach his friends and attendants so warmly to himself, and excite in the breasts of his people—ground down as they were by his exactions—such strong sentiments of loyalty and admiration.

As we look back for a moment upon the scenes and personages of that remote time, dimly shadowed forth to us by the records of early, or the imagination of late, historians, we view a strange and varied picture, like a grand procession passing before us. Clouds brood over the landscape, but when these are cleared away, the sun shines out upon the many-coloured trees, the green hills, and cultured fields, with here and there a lowly hamlet, lordly tower, or solemn fane. A gallant company appear upon the scene with sound of trumpets, gay banners, and glittering armour. There are knights with lance in rest, engaging in the tournament* or the battle, each with visor down, and known only by the device upon his shield, which tells his opponent with whom he has to cope,—bearing on his helm a bit of coloured stuff cut from the dress of some fair dame to whom he has devoted his sword. The king is there, with jewelled crown and panoply of state, surrounded by all the splendour which the earth could give to minister to mortal pride, the man before whom his fellows are content to bow and offer service. Noble ladies are there, gentle and beautiful, but with a courage and strength uncommon to their sex, induced by a life of danger and adventure. We see them joining in the chase; eagerly looking on at the tournament, where their applause is the prize of the victor; defending the castle of their lord in his absence, or even following him to the wars. Prelates in their mitres and costly robes come next upon the scene; some with the mild and benevolent features befitting the ministers of religion; others bearing rather the gait of princes, proud of their superior knowledge, and conscious of a subtle power before which even kings were made to tremble. In cathedral aisles, whose dim light fitly typified the state of religious knowledge, priests are chanting their prayers to heaven, while in noble halls the minstrels are singing their merry songs of earth. So the brilliant pageant passes on, and knights and ladies, monks and minstrels, alike vanish from the scene. The sun shines still on field and tower, but the tower is in ruins, and the gay procession has faded away into the twilight of the past.

Other parts of the landscape are more dimly presented to us. Of the struggles and sufferings of the people, their pursuits and their pleasures, we know comparatively little; they occupy the background of the historical picture, and their acts do not as yet possess much influence upon the destinies of the nation. We see life insecure in all parts of the kingdom, and the property of the weak continually at the mercy of the strong. The laws are for the most part inoperative, or used only by the rich as instruments of oppression. The labourer who toils in the fields, or the citizen who hoards his gold, cannot tell who will reap the fruits of his labour; but, amidst the present confusion, both these classes are steadily increasing in influence. Their condition is by no means one of apathy; a sense of their rights is dawning upon them, of which a proof may be found in the enthusiasm created throughout the country by the teachings of Longbeard, and the deeds of Robin Hood.

* The tournament was first introduced into England by Richard I. The figures upon the shields of the knights were the origin of the modern coat of arms: Richard being the first of the English kings who bore the device of three lions.

CHAPTER L.

Accession of John, surnamed Sans-terre, or Lackland, A.D. 1199—Disaffection of the People of England—Insurrections on the Continent—Philip declares war—Career and Death of Prince Arthur—Invasion of Normandy by the Bretons and the French—Conquest of Normandy and the English Continental Provinces—John's Quarrel with the Pope—Interdict of the Kingdom and Excommunication of the King—Submission of John.

When the news of the death of Richard I. was conveyed to his brother John, he immediately took measures for obtaining possession of the throne. This degenerate son of the house of Plantagenet recovered his courage when he had only a child to oppose his ambitious schemes,—for the young Arthur, whom Richard had appointed his heir, was not yet twelve years old. John, who knew well how little popularity he possessed in England, sent to secure the services of the foreign mercenaries who had been in the army of Richard, offering them a greatly increased rate of pay, and promising to their leaders profitable appointments. Being then in Normandy, he despatched William Mareschall and Hubert Walter, the archbishop of Canterbury, whose adherence he had obtained, into England, to further his claims, and prepare the way for his coming. Meanwhile, he presented himself before the castle of Chinon, and demanded possession of his brother's treasure, which was there deposited. No opposition was made to him in that neighbourhood, and the governor of Chinon, as well as those of other strongholds, opened their gates at his bidding. Not so the lords of Touraine, Anjou, and Maine, who joined the Bretons in supporting the claims of their young prince Arthur, and raised the standard of revolt. John caused himself to be inaugurated at Rouen as duke of Normandy, and having wreaked his vengeance on the citizens of Mans, for having refused him their allegiance, he crossed the channel, and landed at Shoreham on the 25th of May, A.D. 1199, six weeks after his brother's death.

When Hubert of Canterbury and William Mareschall arrived in England, they caused proclamation to be made throughout the kingdom, calling upon all the earls, barons, and owners of land to render fealty to John, duke of Normandy, son of king Henry, son of the empress Matilda. But the character of John was well known to the English barons, and few of them were disposed to yield to the authority of a tyrant whose cruelty had hitherto been measured only by his power. They retired to their castles and fortified towns, preparing them for defence and laying up stores of

provisions. The more turbulent and reckless characters among the people took advantage of the moment when the arm of power was relaxed, and made predatory excursions through the country. Those who had the means armed themselves in defence of their property, and thus continual conflicts were taking place among different classes of the population, and the land appeared to be rapidly approaching a condition of civil war. Whatever may have been the motives which first induced Hubert to espouse the cause of John, it will scarcely be denied that the archbishop was justified in putting an end to this state of things by any means in his power. It has been already stated that Hubert Walter was a man of very high abilities, and these he now exerted to the utmost, and with a remarkable success. Having summoned a council of the barons and prelates at Nottingham, he used all his eloquence to overcome the disaffection of the assembly, while to arguments were added secret gifts and lavish promises in the name of John. These inducements prevailed, and the barons there present took the oath of allegiance.

Great Seal of King John, affixed to Magna Charta.

Immediately after the landing of John, he proceeded to the church of St. Peter, at Westminster, there to prefer formally his claim to the crown. He carried with him a document, which purported to be a will signed by Richard on his death-bed, in which no allusion was made to the claims of Arthur, but John was appointed unreservedly as the successor to the throne. There seems as little reason to suppose that Richard would have made such a will, as to doubt that John was capable of forging it; but whether the instrument was true or not, it had no influence upon the events which followed. The archbishop Hubert was well aware that, according to the laws of primogeniture, Arthur, as the only son of an elder brother, had an undoubted right to the succession; the prelate therefore, in addressing the people assembled in the church, assumed that the monarchy was entirely elective, and that no man could be entitled to the crown unless he were chosen by the nation. He asserted that John had already been so chosen at the council held at Nottingham, and that there was no one of the family of the dead king better fitted to assume the regal dignity. He declared that John possessed those meritorious qualities which had belonged to king Richard —a statement which it would have been difficult to prove; and that for these reasons, as well as for having the same lineage, he was elected king. Whatever may have been the real temper of the assembly, no opposition was made to these statements, and the English crown was conferred upon the most vicious and worthless prince who ever wore it.

The new king began his reign amidst the disaffection, if not the hatred, of the people, while he was menaced on every side by the attacks of enemies from without. In the north, William the Lion, king of Scotland, was preparing to invade his territories, while on the Continent, all his vassals, except those of Normandy, were in insurrection, and the French king, his former ally, had declared war against him. The aspect of affairs was highly favourable to the designs of Philip, who, to further his own ends, declared himself in favour of the cause of the young Arthur. John, having sent an army under the command of William de Stuteville to oppose the Scottish king, passed over into Normandy. Negotiations were then entered into by Philip, who demanded that all the continental provinces subject to England, with the exception of Normandy, should be given up to Arthur, and that a large portion of Normandy should be resigned to the French crown. Such terms could not be accepted, and the war continued.

The young prince, whose claims to the English throne gave rise to so much of bloodshed and revolution, appeared to have been marked for misfortune from his birth. He was a posthumous child, his father, Geoffrey, duke of Brittany, second son of Henry II., having been killed in a tournament several months before Arthur came into the world. The Bretons, who were perpetually struggling for independence against the overwhelming force of France on the one hand and of England on the other, hailed the birth of their native prince with enthusiastic joy, and when his grandfather desired to give him the name of Henry, they one and all insisted that he should be called Arthur, a name which was held in as much honour by them, as among their kindred, the Britons of Wales. The latter people, who held tenaciously by their ancient traditions, handed down by the bards from generation to generation, believed firmly that they were destined once more to possess the whole island of Britain. The

confidence they expressed in this wild hope, opposed as it was to all probability, caused them to be regarded both in England and France as having the gift of prophecy. The songs of their ancient poets, imaginative and obscure, were supposed to possess a hidden meaning which was traced to be attributed the extraordinary fame of king Arthur, of whose existence no authentic records remain, but to whom the glowing imaginations of the Welsh poets attributed superhuman valour and virtues. The writings of that people, when translated into the languages of the Con-

The Death of Prince Arthur. (See page 250.)

in the political events occurring many years afterwards. Hence arose the strange stories related of Myrdhin, a Cambrian bard of the seventh century, who after a lapse of five hundred years had become celebrated under the name of the enchanter Merlin. To this source, also, is tinent, were read with avidity; the troubadours of Provence completed the picture drawn by the Welsh, and from the shadowy outline furnished by tradition, produced that vigorous portraiture of a perfect knight which became celebrated throughout Europe. The Welsh placed the

most entire confidence in the prediction of Merlin, that king Arthur would return to them and restore their ancient glory: and this belief was shared by the Bretons of the Continent. These were the reasons which induced the latter people to call their young chief by the name of Arthur, and as the child grew in strength and beauty, they hoped to see the day when their independence should Brittany, Maine, and Anjou, by acknowledging him as feudal suzerain of those provinces. Constance was a woman of little virtue, and seems to have cared more about the prosecution of her own intrigues than the welfare and safety of her child. The Bretons, headed by William of Desroches, firmly maintained the attitude they had assumed, while John, with his army of mercenaries, advanced upon

King John and the Jew of Bristol. (See page 251.)

be restored through him, and he should rule them without the control of French or English.

While the Bretons were fighting against Richard I., Constance, the mother of Arthur, relinquished their support, and carried her son first to the court of Richard and then to that of the king of France. When John ascended the throne, Arthur was placed under the protection of Philip, to whom the boy-prince was made to surrender the independence of their lands, spreading ruin and devastation around him, burning the villages, and selling the inhabitants as slaves. Philip marched a body of troops to the assistance of Desroches, took possession of several towns of Brittany, and seized some castles on the frontiers belonging to the English. No sooner had he done so, however, than he dismantled or razed to the ground these fortifications, with the view of depriving the country of its defences, and thus leaving it

open to the attacks which he himself proposed to make upon it. When young Arthur, who had declared himself his vassal, ventured a remonstrance against these proceedings, the king replied—"Am I not free to do what I please in my own territories?" Arthur then perceived the mistake he had made in placing his cause in the hands of this rapacious monarch. Assisted by Desroches, the young prince and his mother quitted the French court, and not knowing where to seek a refuge, gave themselves up to John, who, with his customary hypocrisy, received his nephew with smiles and caresses, and at the same time gave orders for his imprisonment. Arthur was apprised of the intended treachery, and having succeeded in effecting his escape, he returned once more to Philip.

The king of France—who well knew the strength which his arms derived from his apparent support of the boy's claims—welcomed him back without anger, and, by way of securing him for the future, conferred upon him the honour of knighthood, and even promised him the hand of his daughter Mary in marriage. This friendly attitude, however, did not exist long. Philip soon perceived that it was impossible to retain possession of his new territories, so long as he was opposed by the inhabitants themselves on the one hand, and the arms of the king of England on the other. He therefore determined to arrange a peace with John, and, for that purpose, he completely sacrificed the interests of the young prince, to whom he had so lately promised an alliance with himself. By a treaty concluded in the following year (A.D. 1200) between the two kings, it was agreed that John should retain possession of all the provinces held by his father, and Arthur was compelled to do homage to his uncle for Anjou, Brittany, and Maine. In return for these concessions Philip obtained the peace he desired, together with the possession of several towns, and a sum of thirty thousand marks. There was also a secret clause, or promise, attached to the treaty, by which, in case the king of England died without issue, the French king should succeed to the whole of his continental dominions.

In spite of the act which thus deprived young Arthur of his inheritance, he remained at the French court, where Philip retained him to be brought forward in case of any new cause of offence on the part of John. It was not long before such an occurrence took place. With the exception of Normandy, the only province under the Anglo-Norman rule which refrained from open rebellion against John was that of Aquitaine, or Guienne. Peace had been maintained there chiefly by the influence of the queen Eleanor, who was the representative of the ancient lords of the province, and to whose person the people had always shown great attachment. In the summer of the year 1200 John made a progress through this part of his dominions, and, by the pomp and parade with which he appeared, made a favourable impression upon the lively and impressible children of the south. On this occasion John, who was a tolerably good actor, exerted all his powers to obtain popularity, and strove to hide his naturally tyrannical and vindictive temper under a smiling face and affable manner. It appears that he was only partially successful. He had not sufficient patience or self-control to continue long this kind of deceit, and on some trifling provocation his real character would display itself. He was already married, and had been so for ten years, to Avisa, daughter of the earl of Gloucester, a gentle and amiable woman; but John was as remarkable for licentiousness as for cruelty, and his passions were under no restraint—except from his fears. At the time of his visit to Aquitaine, he saw a lady whose beauty was celebrated throughout the French provinces, and who immediately attracted his lawless admiration. This was Isabella, the daughter of the count of Angoulême, and lately married to Hugh de Brun, count of la Marche. Regardless of the ties by which both she and himself were bound, John seized possession of her person and took her to Angoulême, where the ceremony of marriage was performed between them by the archbishop of Bordeaux. A few months later he returned to England, carrying with him his new wife, who was crowned at Westminster by the archbishop of Canterbury. John himself was re-crowned on that occasion. He then gave himself up to indolence and luxury, not knowing or caring how the kingdom was governed; heeding little the disaffection of his people at home, or the indignation which his tyranny had excited throughout France.

The count of La Marche was a young and powerful chief, who was not likely to endure without resistance the grievous wrong he had suffered. The barons, his neighbours, made his cause their own; and when he raised the standard of rebellion they armed their retainers in his service. John, apprised of the storm which was gathering in the south, summoned his lords to attend him with their troops. Many of them at once refused, and said openly that they would not unsheathe their swords in such a paltry and dishonourable war. There were some high-minded men among the Anglo-Norman barons; but the majority of them were not apt to be so scrupulous, and their refusal was dictated by no other reason than their hatred to the king. They afterwards proposed to accompany him on condition of all their rights and liberties being restored. John's rage on this occasion gave him energy; and for a time he asserted his authority by compelling the barons to pay the tax of scutage, and to give hostages in place of their personal service. He then crossed over into Normandy, accompanied by Isabella, and proceeded to Paris, where he was received by Philip—a much abler hypocrite—with great show of courtesy. The French king had already entered into an alliance with the count of La Marche, and was at that moment engaged in organising a formidable insurrection in Brittany. A part of Aquitaine still remained quiet under the influence of Eleanor; and through this district John passed in state after he had quitted Paris. He, however, did not go for the purpose of fighting, and soon marched back again, having produced no other effect than to inspire the insurgents with contempt for so aimless a demonstration.

In the year 1202 the struggle at length commenced which was destined to give a fatal blow to the Plantagenet power in France. It has been considered probable that had the successors of Henry II. possessed the abilities which distinguished that monarch, they would ultimately have extended their authority over the whole of France; but if we regard the relative geographical positions of the two countries, and the turbulent and warlike character of the Gallic tribes, it will appear unlikely that such a condition of affairs could have been long maintained, and that on the contrary it was almost a matter of certainty that the French provinces would, sooner or later, become

separated from the English crown; but that separation took place at a much earlier period than it otherwise would have done, in consequence of the indolence and pusillanimity of John. Philip, who had waited only to arrange certain differences in which he had been engaged with the Pope, now openly declared himself in favour of the claims of Arthur, and of the cause of the men of Aquitaine. He proclaimed the young prince count of Brittany, Anjou, and Poitou, and gave him 200 knights, with whom he directed him to march and take possession of those provinces, and to conquer the towns of Poitou, which were in the hands of the English king. Arthur entered into a treaty, by which he resigned to Philip all the Norman territory of which the king had become possessed, or might obtain during the expedition which he was preparing to take into that province. Arthur then raised his standard, and appealed for aid to the Bretons, who promptly responded to the call by joining in alliance with the Poitevins, and sending their prince 500 knights and 400 foot. These, with 100 men-at-arms from Touraine and Poitou, and the small body of French troops, was all the force at his command. It did not suit the purpose of Philip to place too much power in the hands of the boy, to whom he never meant to resign any portion of those territories for which Arthur believed himself to be fighting.

Arthur was now an orphan, his mother Constance having died during his stay at the French court; he was in his fifteenth year, and therefore, though possessing all the valour of his race, he was necessarily deficient in knowledge of the art of war, and of experience in the field. Nevertheless, the boy-leader rode gallantly at the head of his little army, and led them against the town of Mirebeau, in which his grandmother, Eleanor of Aquitaine, was then shut up. His advisers may probably have reminded him that Eleanor had always been the enemy of his mother, and that could he take her prisoner, it would be an important step towards bringing the king his uncle to terms. Whether Arthur was or was not aware that his grandmother was within the town, the circumstance proved fatal to the success of the expedition. The town surrendered without much resistance, but not before Eleanor had thrown herself into the castle, which was very strong, and there this Amazon of eighty maintained a vigorous defence against the attacks of the prince, whose troops had occupied the town. The Breton army remained in apparent security, when John, who on this occasion displayed an extraordinary degree of activity, suddenly appeared before the gates of Mirebeau. The troops of Arthur, though taken by surprise, made a gallant resistance, and it was only by means of treachery that on the night of the 31st of July, John obtained possession of the town. The prince was taken while asleep, and the other leaders of the insurrection were made prisoners without the opportunity of resistance. Among these was the unhappy count of La Marche, Isabella's husband; the viscounts of Thouars, Limoges, and Lusignan, and nearly two hundred other nobles and knights of fame. King John now showed to its full extent the hideous malignity of his nature. He caused his gallant prisoners to be loaded with chains, tied together in open carts drawn by bullocks, and thus to be conveyed to dungeons in Normandy and England. But the deprivation of light, liberty, and hope, was not punishment sufficient to satisfy his cruelty, and he caused them to be subjected to the lingering horrors of starvation. It is related that twenty-two noblemen were starved to death in Corfe Castle, where they had been confined.

Of the fate of the young prince Arthur, no authentic details have been recorded. That his youth and innocence did not save him from the bloody hands of John, is certain; but of the manner in which he came by his death we can only form an idea by comparing the different stories which are current on the subject among the old chroniclers. Arthur was conveyed by his uncle to the castle of Falaise, whence he was removed to that of Rouen. There he disappeared, and there ends the narrative of sober fact, the rest bringing us into the region of conjecture and probability. The Normans, who remained loyal to the English king, spread a report that Arthur died of sickness in the castle of Rouen, or was killed in attempting to make his escape; this statement may be at once rejected as a mere invention, and not a very ingenious one. The account given by some of the French chroniclers is to the following effect:—John having visited his nephew at Falaise, desired him to put confidence in his uncle. Arthur rejected his advances, and said indignantly, "Give me my inheritance, the kingdom of England." The king then sent him to Rouen strongly guarded, and not long afterwards he suddenly disappeared. It was suspected by all men that John had murdered his nephew with his own hands, and he became the object of the deepest hatred. The monks of Margan relate that John killed the prince in a fit of drunkenness, and caused his body to be thrown into the Seine, with stones tied at its feet, but that notwithstanding these, it was cast on the bank, and was buried at the abbey of Bec secretly for fear of the tyrant.*

The story current among the Bretons was nearly similar, with the difference of a change of scene. They related that John having feigned to be reconciled to his nephew, took him from the Castle of Rouen, and caused him to ride in his company in the direction of Cherbourg, keeping near to the sea coast. Towards nightfall one evening, when the prince had ridden with his perfidious uncle in advance of their escort, they arrived at the top of a high cliff overlooking the sea, and John suddenly seized the boy round the waist, and threw him over the cliff. Another account, more circumstantial, and which has been generally received as likely to be the correct one, is given by Ralph, abbot of Coggleshall. This story is as follows:—The king's councillors having represented to him that the Bretons would continue their rebellion so long as the prince Arthur was in a condition to assume the sovereignty, suggested that the eyes of the boy should be put out, and so render him unfit for government. Some ruffians in the king's service were sent to the dungeon at Falaise to execute this cruel deed, but the tears and prayers of the youth, and his helpless condition, moved even their hearts to pity, and Hubert de Burgh, the warden of the castle, took advantage of their hesitation to forward an earnest appeal for mercy to the king. The only result of the petition was the removal of the prince from Falaise to Rouen. On the 3rd of April, A.D., 1203, he was roused from his sleep, and desired to descend to the foot of the tower, beside which flowed the placid waters of the Seine. At the bottom of the steps he saw a boat, in which was seated the king, his

* Ann. de Marg. 13.

uncle, attended by an esquire named Peter de Maulac. The boy shrank back in terror, anticipating the fate which awaited him, and fell on his knees before his uncle, making a last appeal for mercy. But John, whose heart was harder than those of the vilest wretches in his pay, gave the sign, and the murder was committed. Some relate that the esquire hesitated to obey the sign, and that John himself seized his nephew by the hair, ran him through the body, and threw him into the water. Other writers, however, assert that De Maulac was the actual murderer, and this statement is confirmed by the fact that soon afterwards John gave him the hand of a rich heiress in marriage, as the reward of his services.

However near the truth these different statements may have been, it is certain that the rumour of the murder was spread throughout Brittany during the same month of April. The indignation of the people was universal; they had believed their future destiny to be connected with that of their prince, and they professed the greatest attachment to the French king, as the enemy of his murderer. The elder sister of Arthur, the maid of Brittany—whose lot was scarcely more fortunate than that of her brother—was confined in a monastery at Bristol, where she remained for forty years; but the people declared Alice, daughter of Constance by her last husband, and half-sister of Arthur, to be their duchess, and appointed her father, Guy of Thouars, as their regent or governor. The barons of the province then appeared before Philip, to whom, as their feudal suzerain, they complained of the murder of their prince. Philip eagerly availed himself of the appeal, and cited John, as his vassal for the duchy of Normandy, to appear before the court of the barons of France, to whom the name of peers was now first given. The accused monarch did not appear, and was condemned by the court to the forfeiture of all the lands which he held of the kingdom of France, possession of which was to be taken by arms.

No sooner did Philip appear with his forces on the frontier of Poitou, than the inhabitants rose to join his standard, and when he returned to attack Normandy, he found he was anticipated by the Bretons, who had occupied the whole of that portion of the duchy which bordered on their territories. They took by assault the strong castle of Mount St. Michael, seized upon Avranches, and burned the villages which lay between that city and Caen. These successes gave new strength to the expedition of the French king, who, joined by the people of Anjou and Maine, took Andelys, Evreux, Domfrent, and Lisieux, and then joined the Breton army at Caen. While this formidable confederacy menaced him on every side, John was passing his days in voluptuous indolence, or in the sports of the field. When his courtiers brought him intelligence of new successes on the part of his enemies, he expressed his contempt of the rabble of Bretons and of anything they could do; but when in the month of December the insurgents appeared in the neighbourhood of Rouen he suddenly became aware of his danger, and fled over into England.

On his arrival, he demanded the aid of the barons to raise an army for his service, but the call was responded to with the utmost apathy. It would appear that the Anglo-Norman lords no longer possessed the great estates they had formerly held in Normandy, for had such been the case it is not probable that their hatred to the king would have induced them to disregard their own interests. After in vain attempting to raise a sufficient force to oppose the French king, John appealed to Rome (A.D. 1204), and Pope Innocent sent two legates into France for the purpose of negotiating a peace. Philip, however, who had everything to gain by prolonging the war, refused to listen to the entreaties of the legates, and their mission ended without success.

When John fled from Normandy, there remained in his possession throughout the duchy only the town of Rouen and the fortresses of Château-Gaillard and Verneuil. The people of Rouen held out until they were reduced to the last extremity by famine, when, having concluded a truce of thirty days with the French king, they sent to John praying for succour. The messengers found the king playing at chess, and, while they told their deplorable tale, he remained seated at his game and gave them no answer. When the game was over, he told them that he had no means of succouring them, and that they must do the best they could. This was the only recognition he made of the heroic struggle of the citizens on his behalf. Rouen surrendered, the two castles soon afterwards followed its example, and the conquest of Normandy was complete. This duchy was then finally restored to the French crown, after having been separated from it for two hundred and ninety-two years; within the same year, Anjou, Maine, Touraine, Poitou, and Brittany also fell under the authority of Philip, and John retained only a few castles in those provinces and the territory of Aquitaine, which remained nominally under his rule.

The Bretons soon discovered that, so far from having recovered their independence, they had changed the tyranny of a weak arm for that of a strong one. Disgusted with the supremacy of the king of France, they made efforts which proved fruitless to renew their alliance with John, and then with a sort of suicidal ferocity they aided their new sovereign to destroy the independence of their neighbours. In the year 1206, John landed an army at La Rochelle, whence he proceeded to the Loire, taking the castle of Montauban, and burning the town of Angers. His energy, however, did not last long, and for several months he gave himself up to feasting and debauchery. Aroused once more, he passed on to the town of Nantes, to which he laid siege, but on the approach of Philip with an army, he raised the siege, and proposed to negotiate with the French king. During the negotiations John ran away to England, covered with disgrace. By the intervention of the pope, a truce for two years was then arranged between the two kings.

Degraded as he was in the eyes of all honourable men, John retained his arrogance, and governed his kingdom with greater tyranny than ever. In the following year (A.D. 1207) he defied the authority of that power concentred in the Holy See, which was now so formidable throughout Europe, and which he, of all men, was least fitted to resist. The ground of the quarrel was the right of the crown to the appointment of bishops. The pope had canonically appointed Stephen Langton to the see of Canterbury, and the monks of Canterbury refused to submit to any other archbishop; John, however, was determined that his favourite, John de Gray, bishop of Norwich, should receive the appointment, and he sent two knights with a body of soldiers to Canterbury, to drive the rebellious monks out of the country. Once more those walls which had witnessed

the murder of Becket were profaned by a deed of violence; the monks were compelled to quit their monastery and take refuge in Flanders, where they were received into the religious houses. Innocent, who was a man of great ability, sent a temperate letter to the king, demanding redress for this outrage, but John returned an insolent reply, and set the pontiff at defiance. Soon afterwards the bishops of London, Ely, and Worcester received directions from Rome to wait upon the king, and in case they were still unable to obtain redress for the injury, to threaten him with an interdict upon the whole kingdom. John heard the threat with transports of rage, and swore that if the bishops dared to lay his states under an interdict, he would seize upon their property, and drive them and their clergy penniless to Rome,—that if any Roman priests dared to appear in the country, he would cut off their noses and tear out their eyes, and so make them a witness of his vengeance before the nations. Undeterred by these savage menaces, the bishops proclaimed the interdict on the 23rd of March, A.D. 1208, and then fled across the channel. The effect of an interdict has already been described; and in the present instance it was carried out to the fullest extent by the unanimous concurrence of the clergy. During this time the country lay as it were in mourning, the churches were closed, the pictures of the saints covered with black cloth, and their relics laid on ashes in the aisles; the priests refused their offices with the exception of administering the rite of baptism to infants and the sacrament to the dying; and the command of Rome suspended all public prayers to Heaven. At the end of the year Innocent proceeded to further measures, and issued against John the sentence of excommunication.

The king now became alarmed at his position. He saw the spirit of disaffection increasing among his barons; he had made enemies of the clergy, and he was hated by the people. Abroad the aspect of affairs was no less menacing. He knew that the pope would follow up the sentence of excommunication by proclaiming his dethronement, and declaring him unworthy to rule in a Christian land; and he perceived that Philip was making ready to invade England armed with the authority of the Holy See. Wherever he looked he saw none but enemies, and it was evident that his downfall would be attended with a general rejoicing throughout Europe. It is related by Matthew Paris that at this moment of danger John applied for succour to the Emir al Nassir, the powerful chief of the Moslems of Spain. It was even reported that he had offered to embrace the religion of Mahomet, and to become a vassal of the Emir, in return for the assistance he demanded. Improbable and disgraceful as such an offer would have been, there is no doubt that John was capable of making it; but if he did so, it was not accepted, and the king was compelled to give up the attempt to obtain assistance from abroad.

For the purpose of raising an army, John determined to obtain money by any and every means in his power, and in the spring of the year 1210, he commenced a series of exactions compared to which those of his predecessors had been moderate. He employed the most lawless means of forcing their hoards from his subjects, and especially from the Jews, who, as the richest, were invariably the first to suffer on such occasions. He declared that his object was to drive the French king from Normandy, but as soon as he had raised an army, he crossed over into Ireland, where the English nobles had thrown off his authority. He landed on the 6th of June, and on his arrival at Dublin many of the native chiefs came to offer him their homage. With their assistance he marched through the country, destroying the castles of the insurgent barons, who were totally unprepared for resistance, and within a few weeks he had reduced them to submission. He then established English laws in the island, appointing officers to see them duly executed; he also directed that the same coins of money should be used in the two countries, a measure by which the interests of commerce were greatly promoted. Having appointed John de Gray, bishop of Norwich, to the government of the island, he returned to England. This conquest, in which he encountered no opposition, encouraged him to make a descent upon Wales in the following year (1211). For this purpose more money was required, and he obtained it by measures more flagitious, if possible, than before. He summoned before him all the heads of religious establishments, abbots and abbesses, and compelled them to deliver up the property of the church into his hands. Having exhausted this source of supply he again attacked the Jews, visiting them with imprisonment and the torture to force a compliance with his demands. As an instance of the manner in which the unhappy people were dealt with, the following story is related by the chroniclers. There lived at Bristol a very wealthy Jew, who, by the king's command, was thrown into a dungeon until he should consent to pay 10,000 marks for his liberty. As the Jew preferred rather to be incarcerated than to pay such a sum, the king's patience was soon exhausted, and he gave orders that each day one of the prisoner's teeth should be pulled out of his head, until he was reduced to submission.* For seven days the victim endured this torture, but when on the next day the executioner came to pluck out the eighth tooth, the pain which he had suffered overcame the Jew's fortitude, and he consented to pay the money. This command of John, which was mild and merciful compared with his treatment of other of his captives, displays, however, an ingenuity in torture which could only have occurred to a mind thoroughly cruel and malignant.

Having now raised a great army, the king entered Wales and penetrated as far as Snowdon. The people could make no resistance against the force brought against them, and they were compelled to pay to him a tribute of cattle, and to give twenty-eight hostages, the sons of their chiefs, as security for their fidelity. But the efforts made by John to destroy their independence proved altogether fruitless. Their strength now, as in former years, lay in their mountain fastnesses; the spirit of freedom has her seat among mountains in every age and country. Within a year after the king's return to England, the Welsh were again up in arms. As soon as the news was brought to John he hanged the unhappy youths who were in his hands as hostages, and he was preparing for another descent upon Wales, when he learnt that a conspiracy was forming against him among the English barons. He then immediately relinquished his intention and shut himself up for fifteen days in Nottingham Castle, where he seems to have stayed in something like an extremity of fear. His acts at this time were dictated entirely by impulses, now of cruelty, now of cowardice, and cannot be accounted for by any ra-

* Holinshed.

tional rule of conduct. Suddenly he recovered his courage, quitted Nottingham, and marched to Chester, once more declaring that he would exterminate the Welsh; then as suddenly he retraced his steps and returned to London. It would appear that he lived in continual dread of his life, suffering no one to approach him but his immediate attendants and favourites, whose fidelity he secured by his gold, and keeping himself surrounded by large bodies of foreign mercenaries. Hated as he knew himself to be, he made no attempts to change his tyrannical conduct or to conciliate the regard of the people, but, on the contrary, each day

witnessed some new act of cruelty, which rendered him still more obnoxious to his subjects.

At length Pope Innocent listened to the prayers of the English exiles, and solemnly proclaimed the deposition of the English king, as an enemy to the church of Christ, and called upon all Christian princes to take up arms against him, and to join in hurling him from the throne. Stephen Langton, the banished archbishop of Canterbury, with other prelates, appeared with the pope's letters at the French court, and there called together a solemn council, and informed the king and lords of France that the pope gave his sanction to the invasion of England. Innocent promised to Philip the remission of his sins provided he accepted and fulfilled the solemn commission with which he was charged. Philip had other inducements to do so, which were sufficiently strong, and he at once collected an army on the coast of Normandy, and caused a fleet of 1700 vessels to be made ready at Boulogne and other ports to convey them across the channel.

Aroused by the imminence of the danger, John appealed to his subjects to resist the foreign invader, and collected all the vessels in the kingdom which were capable of being used as transports. Then, under the influence of one of his fits of energy, he acted with boldness and determination, and before the French fleet had quitted Normandy, the English vessels crossed the channel and swept along the coast. The superiority already attained by the English sailors was clearly shown on this occasion, and was soon to be still more decisively manifested. A French squadron at the mouth of the Seine was destroyed by the English who also burned the town of Dieppe, and returned triumphantly, the fleet at Boulogne not having ventured to leave the harbour.

While success thus crowned the arms of John on the sea, he possessed on shore a numerous army of stout English

yeomen who had joined his standard, and who, whatever might be their feelings towards him personally, would doubtless have fought well to save their country from a foreign yoke. But John's courage seldom endured beyond the first moments of excitement, and when he found time to calculate risks and chances he consulted his own safety by any means in his power. He took no measures for following up his successes, and it was evident that in spite

John kneeling in homage before the Pope's Legate.

of his haughty defiance of the power of Rome he would now be glad to escape from his dangerous position by humbling himself before it. Pandulph, the legate of the pope, who fully understood the character of John, obtained permission to land in England, and presented himself in the royal presence. He laid before the king the impolicy of his course of action, the danger he incurred from the French king, whose formidable preparations he described, and the probability of a general rebellion among the English barons. The facts were undeniable, and urged as they were with all the skill and eloquence of an able diplomatist, they produced the greatest alarm in the breast of the tyrant. This feeling was increased by the prediction of a hermit named Peter, who asserted that before Ascension day, which was three days distant, the king would have ceased to reign. Irreligious as he was, John was by no means free from superstition, and he seems to have attached more weight to the words of the friar, which he believed foretold his death, than to the arguments of the legate. After some hesitation, his fears prevailed, and he agreed to sign an agreement or treaty with the pope, by which he bound himself to fulfil all those demands of the church whose refusal had caused

his excommunication; to restore the monks of Canterbury to their lands; to receive into favour all the exiled clergy, especially Stephen Langton, the archbishop of Canterbury; and that he should make satisfaction to both clergy and laity for any injuries they had sustained in consequence of the interdict, paying down a sum of £8,000 as a first instalment of such indemnity.

Pandulph agreed in the pope's name that, on the performance of these conditions, the interdict should be removed from the country, and that the servants of the church, including the exiled bishops, should swear fidelity to the king. Four of the chief barons of the kingdom bore witness to this compact, which was solemnly concluded. By this agreement John suffered no peculiar indignity, but it was immediately followed by a proceeding in the highest degree disgraceful, and which can only be accounted for by the subtle art with which the legate worked upon the fears of the pusillanimous monarch. On the 15th of May, A.D. 1213, John proceeded at an early hour in the morning to the church of the Templars at Dover, and there, in the presence of the bishops and nobles of the realm, he knelt down before Pandulph, placed his crown in his hands and took the oath of fealty to the pope. At the same time he gave into the hands of the legate a document which set forth that he, the king of England, lord of Ireland, in atonement for his sins against God and the Church, did of his own free will, and with the consent of the barons, surrender into the hands of pope Innocent and his successors for ever, the kingdom of England and lordship of Ireland, to hold them henceforth as fiefs of the Holy See, John and his successors paying for them a yearly tribute of 700 marks for England, and 300 marks for Ireland.

On the following day, which was the Feast of the Ascension, John awoke with something of the feeling of a criminal whose hour of execution has arrived. The words of the hermit Peter caused him to tremble even more than the thunders of Rome; and he watched the long hours til sunset, anticipating the stroke which was to end his hatefu existence. When the time of the prediction had passed away, and he found himself still alive, he caused Peter and his son to be dragged at the tails of horses to the gibbet, where they were executed as a punishment for the terror they had caused him. But it was commonly said among the people that the monk had told no lie; and that John had ceased to be a king when he laid his crown at the feet of aforeign priest.

CHAPTER LI.

The Reign of John continued—The cause of John espoused by the Pope—The first English Naval Victory—The Battle of Bouvines—Magna Charta—Treachery of John—Prince Louis invited to England—Devastation of the Northern Counties—Death of John.

THE Holy See, having secured a humble and subservient vassal in the king of England, now espoused his cause, and undertook to defend him against his enemies. Pandulph returned to France, and forbade Philip to prosecute the war, or to invade a kingdom which was under the protection of the church. Philip thought proper to argue the matter on religious grounds, and said that he had expended large sums of money upon this expedition, for the purpose of obtaining, according to the promise of the pontiff, the remission of his sins. The legate seems to have cared little about this circumstance, and simply repeated his prohibition. Philip then continued his march towards the coast, prepared to defy the authority of the Holy See, and to continue the expedition, now no longer for the remission of his sins, but avowedly for more worldly ends. His design, however, was frustrated by the disaffection of his vassals, to whom the command of the pope served as a sufficient justification of rebellion. The earl of Flanders, withdrew his forces from the expedition, declaring that he would not engage in such an unjust war. Philip immediately followed him into Flanders, intending to punish his rebellion by seizing upon the whole province. Several towns and fortresses fell into the French king's hands, who passed on, and laid siege to the strong city of Ghent. The earl of Flanders then applied to John for assistance, which it was manifestly to his interest to grant, and which, therefore, was not refused.

The English fleet set sail from the harbour of Portsmouth; five hundred vessels, having on board seven hundred knights and a large force of infantry, under the command of William Longspear, earl of Salisbury, a son of Fair Rosamond, and William, earl of Holland. They bore down upon the coast of Flanders, and approached the port of Damme, in which the French fleet, three times more numerous, was lying at anchor. Many of the French troops and sailors were then absent from the ships, engaged in predatory excursions throughout the country. As the English neared the coast, they saw a number of vessels lying outside the harbour, which, capacious as it was, would not contain them all. Shallops, or fishing-boats, were then sent in to reconnoitre, and returned with the news that the fleet had been left without sufficient hands to defend it. No time was lost; the "tall ships" along the coast were attacked, and captured with little difficulty. The smaller vessels, which when the tide went down were left upon the beach, were plundered and set on fire, the men on board escaping to the shore. The English then approached the harbour, for the purpose of attacking the fleet within it; but here a delay took place in consequence of the difficulty of bringing a large force to bear in so confined a space.

The period of inaction, however, did not last long, and the fleet, on the preparation of which Philip had exhausted his resources, and which was the first naval armament ever put to sea by the French kings of the Capetian line, was destined to be annihilated. "Those Frenchmen that were gone abroad into the country, perceiving that the enemies were come by the running away of their mariners, returned with all speed to their ships to aid their fellows, and so made valiant resistance for a time; till the Englishmen getting on land, and ranging themselves on either side of the haven, beat the Frenchmen so on the sides, and the ships grappling together in front, that they fought as it had been in a pitched field, till that, finally, the Frenchmen were not able to sustain the force of the Englishmen, but were constrained, after long fight and great slaughter, to yield themselves prisoners." * Thus, in the first naval engagement between the two nations, the superiority of the English sailors was placed beyond a doubt. In the clumsy barks of the thirteenth century there was exhibited little of that science which guides the stately clipper of the nineteenth, but there was no lack of seamanship; the same stout arms

* Holinshed.

manned the ropes,—the same stout hearts opposed the foe. As the noise of the battle gradually died away, and the smoke of the burning vessels, curling up from the waters, wound itself about the hills and disappeared, the shattered gear of the English ships was seen to bear aloft the flag whose name is Victory. Then did Europe bend in unwilling submission while the islanders assumed for ever the empire of the seas. Since then, the centuries have rolled away, each bearing its load of change, decay, and death. Our fathers have done the work set apart for them, and are at rest; but their blood—their hearts are ours, and their flag we bear aloft over every sea, unconquered now as then. To the remotest shores it carries knowledge, commerce, the arts of life, the hope of heaven; and though not without stain, it has seldom failed to oppose force to wrong, and to uphold the cause of justice: blow high, blow low, it passes on its way unscathed; and storm of wind or rage of man beats vainly against the flag which, with its kindred banner of America, bears within its folds the future of the world.

When the conquerors had returned thanks to Heaven for their victory, they sent three hundred of the prizes to England; these were richly laden with stores for the French army, corn, oil, wine, and other provisions. Others of the ships which were on shore, were burnt within the harbour. A portion of the fleet which lay higher up, protected by the town, still remained uninjured, and the English, having landed, were joined by the earl of Flanders, and proceeded to attack the place. Meenwhile, the French king had learnt the destruction of his fleet, and, having raised the siege of Ghent, was advancing with the utmost rapidity. The English and the Flemings made a gallant defence in the engagement which soon afterwards took place; but the force opposed to them was overwhelming, and they were compelled to retreat to their ships, with a loss which is stated by the French to have been two thousand men. But the English had no intention of relinquishing the contest, and from the shores of the isle of Walcheren, they watched their opportunity for renewing the attack. Philip perceived that the unskilfulness of his seamen left no hope of preserving the remainder of his ships, and he therefore set fire to them himself, that they might not fall into the enemy's hands. It was evident that the project of invading England must now be abandoned, the French king having no means of transporting his troops across the channel. He even found it impossible to maintain them in Flanders, and was compelled to make a hasty retreat into his own territories, with scarcely an effort to maintain possession of the towns he had taken.

Elated by the success of his arms, John assumed all his old arrogance of demeanour, and showed little disposition to fulfil the terms of the treaty into which he had entered with the pope. He now determined to invade France, and for this purpose he summoned the barons of the kingdom to attend him at Portsmouth with their troops. They obeyed the command, but when in warlike array they appeared before the king, they refused to set sail unless the exiled bishops were immediately recalled, according to his promise. John was compelled to submit, and Stephen Langton, archbishop of Canterbury, with the bishops of London, Ely, Lincoln, Bath, and Hereford, were restored to their benefices. The monks of Canterbury also returned in peace to their cloister. The king and the archbishop met each other at Winchester, where they exchanged a kiss of amity, and Langton gave the king absolution for the injuries done to himself and his colleagues; John once more taking an oath to execute justice, and to preserve his fealty to the pope. But Stephen Langton, one of the ablest men who ever had filled the archiepiscopal chair, was not likely to place much confidence in the promises of the king, and John evidently regarded the archbishop with bitter hatred, as the cause of all his troubles.

Leaving directions for the barons to follow him with all speed, John embarked a body of troops in a few ships, and reached the island of Jersey. The barons, however, were little disposed to follow their pusillanimous king; and the scheme for securing their liberties, which, in a vague and indefinite form, had long held possession of their minds, now began to assume strength and consistency. They excused themselves from following the king, by the assertion that their term of feudal service was expired; and profiting by his absence proceeded to hold a great council at St. Albans, at which decrees were issued in the form of royal proclamations, reviving old and mild laws, and threatening with death such of the king's officers as should exceed their provisions. Meanwhile John, having looked in vain for the appearance of the barons, returned from Jersey in a transport of rage, and collecting his army of mercenaries, marched towards the north, burning up and devastating the lands of the rebellious nobles. At Northampton he was met by the archbishop of Canterbury, who openly censured these acts of violence, and told him that, according to his oath, his vassals ought to be tried by their peers, and not crushed by arms. "Mind you your church," the king replied, "and leave me to govern the state." He then continued his march to Nottingham, but here Langton, who joined the courage of the soldier to the wisdom of the priest, again presented himself in the royal presence, and this time with more determined carriage. He calmly told the king that if such a course of action was continued, he would excommunicate all the ministers and officers of the crown who obeyed the royal will. John seldom maintained his ground against a determined opponent, and he now gave way once more, and as a matter of form summoned the barons to meet him, or his justices. Having thus stopped the tyrannous career of the king, the brave archbishop proceeded to London, where, on the 25th of August, he called a second council of the barons, and read to them the provisions of the charter granted by Henry I. on his accession. In that assembly of feudal lords he delivered an address advocating the principles of liberty and justice; and having induced the council to adopt as the basis of their exertions the charter of Henry I., he caused them to swear fidelity to each other, and to the cause in which they were embarked. A month later the cardinal Nicholas, a new legate of the pope, arrived in England, for the purpose of receiving the indemnity which had been promised by John, and of removing the interdict from the kingdom. Once more John appeared on his knees, renewing his oath of fealty to Innocent, and doing homage to his legate. He paid the sum of 15,000 marks to the bishops, and undertook to give them 40,000 more. The interdict was then removed, the churches lost their funereal appearance, and once more the bells rang out their daily call to prayer. The cause of liberty has never been long maintained by the Church of Rome, and as soon as the submission of John was thus completely assured, she relin-

quished her support of the barons, and commanded her bishops to give their unreserved allegiance to the king. The nobles, however, still relied upon the strength of their cause, although unblessed by the pope, and Stephen Langton remained firmly at their head, as one who dared do right though all the world forbade it.

The following year (1214) was rendered memorable by the battle of Bouvines, in which the French gained a complete victory over English, Flemish, and German troops. A powerful confederacy, in which John took a prominent part, had been formed against the French king. Ferrand, earl of Flanders, Reynaud, earl of Boulogne, and Otho, emperor of Germany, determined in conjunction with John to invade France simultaneously, and to divide that kingdom among them. The partition was already made; Ferrand was to receive Paris, with the isle of France, Reynaud the country of Vermandois, John the territory beyond the Loire, and Otho all the remaining provinces. The English king despatched a body of troops, commanded by William Longsword, earl of Salisbury, to Valenciennes, which had been appointed the head-quarters of the confederates; he then proceeded to Poitou, whence he led his army into Brittany. Philip, who was thus menaced on both sides, sent his son Louis to oppose the troops of John, and to prevent his advance. This was not difficult, and the cowardice or indecision of the English king kept him in a state of inactivity, while his allies were being utterly routed. Philip, whose forces were inferior in number to those of his enemies, gave them battle at Bouvines, a village between Lisle and Tournay, and after a sanguinary conflict the earl of Salisbury, the earl of Flanders, and the earl of Boulogne were taken prisoners, together with great numbers of nobles and knights of inferior rank. The bishop of Beauvais, whose martial spirit was untamed by his long imprisonment, appeared again in the field on this occasion, and he it was who took prisoner the gallant William Longsword. The bishop, however, no longer used a sword, but carried in its stead a formidable club, with which he laid about him, having satisfied himself, by some curious logical process, that in doing so he was acting in accordance with the canon of the church, which forbade her priests to shed blood. He was not the only bishop who distinguished himself on that day as a warrior. Guerin of Senlis appeared among the French troops, like Odo of Bayeux among the soldiers of the Conqueror, bearing a wand, or staff of authority, with which he waved them on to victory. The battle of Bouvines, which was fought on the 27th of July, A.D. 1214, is one of the few which this history will have to record as having given an undoubted lustre to the French arms.

A few months later John made proposals for a truce, which he obtained for five years, on condition of restoring all the towns and fortresses which he had taken during the expedition. He then made a disgraceful retreat to England, where, with the true spirit of a coward, he vented upon his unoffending subjects that rage which he dared not display towards his foes. He disregarded all the vows he had taken, and let loose his foreign mercenaries over the country, who oppressed and robbed the people in every direction, unrestrained by law and secure of the king's favour. But his career of tyranny was now drawing to a close. Each day which was marked by new acts of oppression cemented more closely the league among the barons, who only waited an opportunity of assembling together for the purpose of arranging a combined movement. Such an opportunity presented itself at the feast of St. Edmund, on the 20th of November, when pilgrims of all ranks from every part of the country proceeded to St. Edmondsbury to offer their devotions at the shrine of the saint. Mingling with the crowd of worshippers, the champions of freedom advanced one by one in order of seniority to the high altar, on which they placed their swords, and swore that if the king refused to admit the rights they demanded from him, they would one and all abandon their allegiance, renounce their vows of fealty, and compel him by force of arms to sign a charter granting their just requests. Having agreed to assemble at the court for this purpose in the approaching festival of Christmas, they separated.

When Christmas day arrived John was at Worcester, where he was attended only by a few of his immediate retainers and the foreign mercenaries. None of his great vassals came, as the custom was at that season, to offer their congratulations; his attendants tried in vain to assume an appearance of cheerfulness and festivity, and among the people such an appearance had long ceased to be found when the king was present. Alarmed at the gloom which surrounded him, and the desertion of the barons, John hastily rode to London, and there shut himself up in the house of the Knights Templars, which was as strong as a fortress. The temper in which the barons entered upon their cause may be inferred from the seasons which they chose for their efforts, and the manner in which they invoked, as it were, the blessing of Heaven upon them. Some holy day consecrated each step of their way, and marked the renewal of the struggle against tyranny. On the feast of the Epiphany they assembled in great force at London, and presenting themselves before the king demanded an audience. John was compelled to grant the request, but he assumed a bold and defiant air, and met the barons with an absolute refusal and the most violent threats. Two of their number were affected by these menaces, and one of the bishops joined them in consenting to recede from their claims; but the rest of the assembly were made of sterner stuff, and firmly maintained their demands. John looked upon their calm and dauntless faces with a dread which he could not conceal. He entirely changed his manner, and descended from invective to expostulation. "This petition," he said, "treats of matters weighty and arduous. You must grant me time for deliberation until Easter, that I may be able, in considering the request, to satisfy the dignity of my crown." Many of the barons were opposed to such a delay, knowing how little dependence could be placed upon the king's good faith, but the greater number consented on condition that Stephen Langton, archbishop of Canterbury, William, earl of Pembroke, and the bishop of Ely, should be sureties for the king that he would give them a reply at the time appointed.

As soon as the nobles had quitted his presence, John directed his efforts to escaping from the pledge he had given, and took measures which he hoped would bring the rebellious lords within the reach of his vengeance. The important privilege of the appointment of bishops, which in former years had given rise to so many disputes between the crown and the church, was now formally abandoned; and when, by this means, John believed himself to have secured the goodwill of the clergy, he caused a new oath

of allegiance to be administered by the sheriffs to all the free men of their several counties. He then despatched messengers to Rome, entreating the aid of the pope against the treasonable violence of the barons. Innocent listened to the appeal, and showed himself determined to support the cause of his royal vassal. The English nobles had also sent their message to the pontiff, but he answered it only by a letter of threats and reproaches, which was addressed to Stephen Langton, commanding him and his colleagues at once to cease their opposition to the king. Langton, with a high-souled courage, the full extent of which we can now only imperfectly appreciate, disregarded the command, and dared to defend a righteous cause, even in defiance of the pope. The king, as a last effort to sustain his tottering throne, assumed the cross, making a solemn oath that he would lead an army on a new crusade to the Holy Land.

When Easter day arrived the king was at Oxford. The barons of England assembled at Stamford, attended by two thousand knights, and vast multitudes of their retainers, and of the people. They had marched within a few miles of Oxford, when they were met by Stephen Langton, the earl of Warrenne, and the earl of Pembroke, who came to bear their message to the king. The barons delivered the schedule containing the chief articles of the petition, and declared that if their claims were not instantly granted they would appeal to arms. When the deputation returned to the king, and Langton explained to him the terms of the document which he brought, John fell into a transport of rage, and swore that he would not grant them liberties which would make him a slave. He proposed some modifications of the charter, which were at once rejected. Pandulph, who stood at his side, asserted that the primate of the kingdom ought to excommunicate the rebels; but Langton replied that the pope's real intentions had not been expressed, and that so far from doing so, he would excommunicate the foreign mercenaries which overran the kingdom, unless the king ordered their instant dismissal.

The barons now declared war against the king, chose Robert Fitz-Walter as their leader, and marched against the castle of Northampton, which was garrisoned by foreigners. "The army of God and the church," for so they styled themselves, was composed of the best and bravest men in the kingdom; but the strong fortress to which they first laid siege resisted all their attacks. They had prepared no battering-rams, or other necessary engines; and the garrison, on their side, fought with the desperation of men who knew that they had earned for their misdeeds a bitter retribution. After fifteen days the besiegers raised the siege, and marched towards Bedford. The barons were strong in arms, and in the justice of their cause; but their strength was not of itself sufficient to overturn the throne, or force the king to submission. Within the past century a middle class of freemen had been growing up in the country, increasing in wealth and influence year by year. Had the king possessed the affections of the free-burghers of England, the Anglo-Norman barons, powerful as they were, would have been driven from the country; but the people knew that now, at least, the cause of the nobles was their own, and they rose with joy to welcome the pioneers of freedom. The men of Bedford opened their gates at the approach of the army, and the citizens of London sent messengers to the leaders, inviting them to march thither with all speed, and assuring them of the support of the people.

On Sunday, the 24th of May, the troops of Fitz-Walter reached the capital. The city of London lay wrapped in that Sabbath stillness which, on summer days, descends like a blessing upon an English landscape, as though Nature herself had ceased from labour. The gates were open, and the music of the church bells floated softly through the air as the army of God approached the walls. They passed through the streets in perfect order and profound silence; a mien well suited to convey to all who saw them a conviction of the solemn nature of the duty they came to perform, and of the calm determination with which they would pursue their object. On the following day the barons issued a proclamation to all the nobles and knights of the kingdom who had remained neutral, calling upon them to join the national standard, unless they wished to be treated as enemies of their country. This proclamation aroused the slumbering patriotism of those who received it. The baron, with his troop of men-at-arms, and the knight, whose only property was his horse and his sword, alike hastened to London. In the words of the old chroniclers, there is no need to name the men who composed the army of God and the church; they were the whole nobility of England.

Such a demonstration as this might have made a much braver monarch than John Lackland turn white with fear. Only a very few knights from among his numerous courtiers remained at his side, and these were hardly retained in their allegiance by a mingling of lavish promises and threats. The terror of the king now conquered his rage. Once more he assumed an affable demeanour, and with a sickly smile he told the earl of Pembroke that the barons had done well, and that for the sake of peace and the exaltation of his reign he was ready to grant the liberties they demanded. From Odiham, in Hampshire, where John was then staying, the earl of Pembroke carried this message to his friends, and informed them that the king only desired them to name a day and place of meeting. The barons replied—"Let the day be the 15th of June; the place, Runny-mead."

The scene thus chosen was well suited to the occasion. No narrow walls of wood or stone, which in succeeding years should crumble into dust and leave no trace, bore witness to the solemn act whose effects were destined to extend to remotest ages: the victory of freedom was gained under the free sky, the dome of the universal temple of God. On the appointed day the king quitted Windsor Castle, and proceeded to the green meadow which was called by the Saxon name of Runny-mead, situated on the banks of the Thames, between Staines and Windsor. He was attended by Pundulph, Almeric, the grand master of the Templars, the earl of Pembroke, together with eight bishops and thirteen other men of rank; but of these, though they stood at his side, few really adhered to the tyrant, or were prepared to give him any advice contrary to the wishes of the people. On the other side stood the barons of the kingdom, attended by a vast multitude, representing all other classes of the population. So completely was the arrogance of the king subdued, so hopeless appeared all resistance, that, with scarcely a word of remonstrance, John signed the document presented to him, which, as the foundation of the liberties of England,

is known to us by the name of Magna Charta—the Great Charter.

To the Englishman of modern times, the event of that day bears a deep and solemn interest, far surpassing that of battles or of conquests. He is surrounded now by many of the blessings which freedom gives to all who live beneath her sway. Under her warm smile civilisation grows and flourishes, knowledge sheds around her calm, undying light, wrong is redressed by free opinion, and man, with brow erect, throws off the tyranny of man. In the green meadow by the Thames was sown the seed which bears such fruits as these. Centuries more of toil and struggle may be needed to bring it to maturity. The progress of the human race is slow and beset with difficulties;

John refusing to sign Magna Charta when first presented to him. (See page 257),

amidst the present material prosperity, with all the advantages of civil and religious liberty, we are still far from the goal which lies before us. Error still treads close upon the heels of Truth; power is still held by the few to the discouragement of the many; poverty still retains her grasp upon half the world, grinding men down to a life-long struggle, with little joy or hope. But the work steadily goes on. With each passing year flies a prejudice; with each passing year some gigantic wrong lifts up its head and claims and meets redress. Now, at least, the way is open to us, and cannot be mistaken; the light of heaven shines full upon it, the obstacles grow fewer and weaker every day, the efforts to oppose them grow stronger, and the final triumph is secure.

The value and importance of Magna Charta is not to be estimated by its immediate application to ourselves. Those positive laws and institutions of later times, which secure our rights and liberties, all have their root in this charter, which first established a legal government, and asserted the claims of justice. Some modern writers who have treated of this subject, have thought fit to disregard these facts, and have spoken of Magna Charta as merely a grant ob-

Rage of John after the Signing of Magna Charta.

tained by the barons for their own purposes, and that its provisions were framed by them, not with a view to the restoration of the Saxon laws, but for the preservation of their own feudal privileges. It is evident that the majority of the barons, who were of Norman extraction, could have little interest in restoring the Saxon laws as such; but it is also certain that they were actuated by a strict regard for justice, and that those just principles upon which some of the laws of Edward

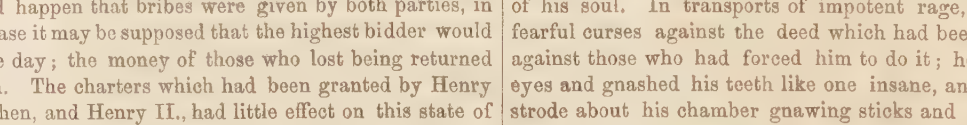
the Confessor were founded, also formed the basis of Magna Charta.

During the reigns of the successors of the Conqueror, the king had exercised the power of exacting arbitrary payments from his subjects under the name of reliefs; of farming out the estates of his wards to the highest bidder, of marrying the heir during his minority, heiresses at any age above fourteen, and widows if they held estates of the crown, giving their hands to whom he pleased. In the reign of John, the exercise of the laws was a matter of common bargain and sale. Bribes, or, as they were called, fines, were received for the king's help against adverse suitors, for perversion of justice, or delay in its administration. Sometimes it would happen that bribes were given by both parties, in which case it may be supposed that the highest bidder would gain the day; the money of those who lost being returned to them. The charters which had been granted by Henry I., Stephen, and Henry II., had little effect on this state of things, and were, in fact, repeatedly violated both by themselves and their successors. By the provisions of Magna Charta, reliefs were limited to a moderate sum, computed according to the rank of the tenant; the wrong and waste committed by the guardians in chivalry restrained; the disparagement in matrimony of female wards forbidden; and widows secured from being forcibly disposed of in marriage. The franchises of the city of London, and of all towns and boroughs, were declared inviolate. The ports were freely thrown open to foreign merchants, and they were permitted to come and go as they pleased. The Court of Common Pleas, which had hitherto followed the king's court, whereby much inconvenience and injustice had been occasioned, was fixed at Westminster.

The most important clauses of Magna Charta are those which protect the personal liberty and property of every freeman in the kingdom, by giving security from arbitrary imprisonment, and unjust exactions. "No freeman," says the charter, "shall be taken, or imprisoned, or dispossessed of his tenement, or be outlawed or exiled, or any otherwise proceeded against, unless by the judgment of his peers, or by the law of the land." The charter also assured the appointment of upright judges, that justice should not be sold or denied to any man, and that the property of every freeman should be disposed of according to his will, or in case he died intestate, that his heirs should succeed to it.

The barons required securities for the due observance of these provisions. They demanded that the foreign officers of the crown, with their families and retainers, should be sent out of the country; that the barons should keep possession of the city, and Stephen Langton of the Tower of London, for the two months following; that twenty-five of their number should act as guardians of the liberties of the realm, whose business it should be to secure the observance of the charter, and who in case of its provisions being disregarded should have power to make war upon the king, and to seize upon his towns, castles, or other possessions, until the grievance should be redressed. By this article the twenty-five barons were invested with the real government of the kingdom, setting aside altogether the royal prerogative, a measure which, opposed as it was to all precedent, must be considered as having been rendered necessary by the duplicity of the king, by whom the most solemn oaths were habitually disregarded.

When the vast assembly had dispersed, and the defeated tyrant found himself again in Windsor Castle, attended only by some of the foreign adventurers who still hung about his person, he gave vent to all the suppressed passion of his soul. In transports of impotent rage, he uttered fearful curses against the deed which had been done, and against those who had forced him to do it; he rolled his eyes and gnashed his teeth like one insane, and restlessly strode about his chamber gnawing sticks and stones. So say the chroniclers, and the account may readily be believed; a depraved heart, hardened by a long course of crime and cruelty, would probably display itself in an out-



Specimen of the Writing of Magna Charta.

burst of passion, in colours such as these. His attendants, the slaves of his gold, who saw their career of robbery and injustice suddenly cut short, incited the king to vengeance for the humiliation he had sustained, and counselled him to resist the charter, and to take measures for the recovery of his power. John, released from his immediate fears, listened to their advice, and sent two of them to the continent to carry out the schemes they proposed. One of them took his way to Rome to appeal to the pope for prompt and efficient aid; the other proceeded to Flanders, Gascony, and among the former continental vassals of the king, to hire fresh bodies of mercenaries and to bring them over to England. Meanwhile the king entered secretly into communication with all the governors of castles who were foreigners, ordering them to lay up stores of provisions, and keep themselves prepared for defence, "doing this without noise and with caution, for fear of alarming the barons."

The barons did not yet know what hard and unremitting effort the struggle for liberty demands. They looked upon the work as done, when, in fact, it was only beginning; and on their departure from Runny-mead they appointed a grand tournament to be held on the 2nd of July at Stamford, in celebration of their joy. No sooner did he hear of their intention, than John threw to the winds the oaths he had taken, and formed a plot to take possession of London during the absence of the nobles. The scheme, however, was communicated to them, and the tournament was arranged to take place nearer the capital. The king now proceeded to Winchester, when some deputies from the barons presently demanded an interview with him. They required an explanation of the line of conduct, ambiguous if not treacherous, which he had adopted since the signing

of the charter. John met them with the hollow smile which he was accustomed to put on at such times, and assured them that their suspicions were unfounded, and that he was prepared to fulfil all that he had promised. The barons withdrew, little satisfied by these assertions, and the king took his way to the Isle of Wight, where he remained for three weeks. Here he refused all companionship but that of the fishermen and sailors of the place, whose manners he adopted with the view of making himself popular among them. To a certain extent he seems to have succeeded; and during the struggle which soon afterwards took place, the English sailors proved generally true to his cause.

In July, John was at Oxford, but after a stay of a few days he again turned to the south, and proceeded to Dover, where he remained, anxiously awaiting the arrival of the mercenaries, whom he expected from the Continent. During the month of September, the barons learnt that troops were landing in small bodies, with little noise, but in a manner which indicated a well-organised confederacy. William d'Albiney was then sent with a picked force of men-at-arms to seize upon the royal castle of Rochester. Having done so, he found it extremely ill-furnished with stores or means of defence; and in this condition it was besieged by John, who had quitted Dover with an army of robbers and ruffians of every dye, from various parts of the Continent. Each day brought them new reinforcements across the channel, and their numbers so greatly increased that when the barons quitted London to the relief of Rochester, they were compelled to turn back before the superior force opposed to them. It seemed as though the elements themselves could alone check this invasion of banditti. A certain Hugh de Boves, one of their leaders, had embarked from Calais with a vast force of his irregular troops, when a storm arose, against which the unskilful mariners were quite helpless, and the whole of the ships, with those on board, were destroyed. John heard of this loss with another burst of rage, but he still pressed on the siege of Rochester, and succeeded in preventing all succour from reaching it. D'Albiney maintained the defence for eight weeks with unshaken determination, and it was not until the outer wall of the castle had been beaten down, and the garrison reduced to the last extremity by famine, that he threw open the gates. John immediately ordered the brave commander to be hung with all his men; but Savaric de Manlion, the leader of one of the foreign bands, opposed this command, because he feared the acts of retaliation which it would certainly provoke on the part of the English. The tyrant, shorn of his power on all sides, was compelled to submit his barbarous will to the decision of the foreign chief; the prisoners of inferior rank were butchered by the king's orders, but the knights were spared, and were sent for imprisonment to the strong castles of Corfe and Nottingham.

The pope now responded to the application of John by declaring himself against the English nation, and issuing sentence of excommunication against the barons. He asserted that they were worse than Saracens for daring to rebel against a vassal of the Holy See, a religious monarch who had taken up the cross. This decision of the pope, together with the success at Rochester, gave John new courage, and he marched northward to St. Albans, accompanied by the immense force which, composed of many races, and presenting striking contrasts of appearance and accoutrements, possessed one common attribute of unredeemed ferocity. The citizens of London, who were among the first to join in the struggle for right, were also among the bravest to maintain it, and as the foreign hordes swept by the city, showed an undaunted front, which deterred the king from attacking them. From St. Albans he passed on towards Nottingham, encouraging his soldiers to seize their pay from the wretched inhabitants of the country. The northern counties had long been the chief seat of disaffection, and now Alexander, the young king of Scotland, who had concluded an alliance with the English barons, crossed the borders with an army, and laid siege to the castle of Norham. John saw the means of vengeance in his hands, and he determined to use them to the utmost. A few days after the feast of Christmas, when the ground was covered with snow, he marched from Nottingham into Yorkshire, laying waste the country, and meeting with no opposition. True to the instincts of his base and malignant character, he became more ruthless in proportion to the helplessness of his victims. Every house and village on the road was destroyed, the king himself giving the example, and setting fire with his own hands in the morning to the roof which had sheltered him during the night. The fury of the savage horde did not end there. The inhabitants, driven from their homes, were plundered of everything they possessed, and often butchered upon their own hearthstones. Others, less happy, were subjected to torture to make them give up their hidden stores of money. Such tortures are described by the chroniclers, as only to read of may well cause our blood to run cold with horror, and excite at once our wonder and our fear at the depths of depravity to which human nature may sink. In the castle of Heidelberg, in Germany, there is a large picture which is usually concealed from the eyes of the visitor by a curtain. It represents with terrible fidelity a mode of torture which still existed during the middle ages: that of flaying alive. The victim is one of the early Christian martyrs. He stands bound hand and foot to a post, and two ruffians are engaged in stripping the skin from his arms. The head of the martyr is thrown back, as in his agony he looks upward. Behind and above him appears the figure of an angel; the face, when viewed from immediately below, is perfectly calm, but if the spectator steps a few paces backwards, and to the right, it assumes an expression of the deepest pity. In his right hand the angel holds a pen, to which he points, as though to tell thedying man that his name is written in heaven. It is only by means of such representations as these that we can bring clearly before our minds the deeds of horror which darken the records of the middle ages, so unnatural do they appear, and happily so opposed to the feelings and habits of modern times.

The expedition of John to the north, like that of William the Conqueror through the same district, was one long course of rapine and cruelty; castles and towns were burned to the ground, and the path of the king was marked by a trail of blood among blackened heaps of ruins. The young king of Scots retired before the vast force brought against him, and John pushed his way to Edinburgh. Here he found himself in danger of attack, and, as was usual with him in such cases, he at once turned back, and recrossed the border. Among the towns burnt up by the king during this expedition, were Alnwick, Morpeth, Mit-

ford, Roxburgh, Berwick, Haddington, and Dunbar. A division of his forces had been left in the south to oppose the barons, and keep in check the citizens of London; and this division, reinforced by fresh arrivals from the continent, made predatory incursions through the southern counties, marking their course with equal ferocity. The only distinction between their conduct and that of the king, appears to have been that the castles which fell into their hands were occupied by some one of their number, instead of being destroyed.

Meanwhile further measures had been taken by the church against the insurgent barons. The abbot of Abingdon, with other ecclesiastics, in obedience to the tyrant and the pope who supported him, fulminated a second sentence of excommunication, in which Robert Fitz-Walter, the chief of the confederacy, with many others of the most powerful nobles, were mentioned by name, and an interdict was placed upon the city of London. The measure was not without its effect upon certain classes of the country people, but the courage and intelligence of the citizens of London rose superior to the thunder of Rome. In those days the spiritual thraldrom of Europe was complete, and knowledge confined almost exclusively to the clergy; but the men of Saxon race possessed a strong sense of justice, and their very instincts told them to despise a power which supported cruelty and oppression in the name of God. In defiance of the interdict they dared still to offer their prayers to heaven, and to keep the solemn festival of Christmas; the churches remained open, and the bells still rang out the note of freedom.

But dangers were thickening on every side around them. The barons saw themselves hemmed by increasing hordes of foreigners, and at the same time had reason to fear the effect of the excommunication upon the *villains*, who were, probably, the most numerous class of the population. It does not appear that there was among the nobles any man of sufficient influence or military genius to break through the obstacles by which they were surrounded. Many councils were held and schemes proposed, only to be laid aside as unfeasible. At length the barons determined to offer the English throne to Prince Louis, the eldest son of Philip of France. Such a step scarcely admits of excuse under any circumstances, but the barons, unable of themselves to wrest the power from John, might not improbably consider that any change would be to their advantage, and that it would be better for the country to be under the rule even of the son of their ancient enemy, than to submit to a tyrant who had lost every attribute of manhood.

Louis had married Blanche of Castile, who was the niece of John, and thus he might pretend to some shadow of a title to the crown. The barons also considered that, if he landed in England, many of the foreign mercenaries, who were subjects of France, would be detached from the cause of John, and would join the standard of their prince. When the proposal was carried to the court of France, it was received by the king and his son with that degree of exultation which might have been anticipated. Louis was anxious to sail for England immediately, but Philip with more wisdom and caution, demanded that twenty-four hostages, the flower of the English nobility, should first be sent to Paris, in assurance of the fidelity of the barons. A French fleet then sailed up the river Thames, and arrived at London in February (A.D. 1216), conveying a small army, which formed the first detachment of the French forces. The commander informed the barons that the prince Louis would arrive in person at the approaching feast of Easter.

The pope—true to the cause he had embraced—no sooner heard of these preparations, than he sent a new legate into England, who, as he passed through France, boldly remonstrated with the king and his son upon the course they were pursuing. Once more England was called the patrimony of St. Peter, and Philip was asked how he dared to attack it, and was threatened with immediate excommunication in case he persisted in doing so. Louis immediately set up a claim to the English throne in right of his wife, and, leaving the legate in astonishment at this new view of the matter, he escaped from farther argument and took his way to Calais. Having collected a great army, well furnished with stores, he embarked them on board 680 vessels and set sail from Calais at the appointed time. The English sailors of the cinque ports, on whom the efforts of John to secure their good will had not been thrown away, lay in wait for an opportunity of inflicting damage on the invaders, and a storm having arisen by which the French fleet became scattered, they took advantage of the circumstance and cut off and captured some of the ships. The rest of the fleet arrived safely at Sandwich, where Louis landed on the 30th of May.

John had arrived at Dover with a large army, but so far from attempting to prevent the landing of the French, he made a rapid retreat at the news of their approach. His own unhappy subjects however were not in a position to oppose him; them he could attack and slaughter in safety, and accordingly, wheresoever his army passed, the same cruelties were practised, the same ravages committed, as before. He went to Guilford, whence he proceeded to Bristol by way of Winchester. Meanwhile Louis led his forces to Rochester castle, which he besieged and captured, and then passed on to London. The French prince entered the capital on the 2nd of June A.D. 1216, and was received with the greatest demonstrations of joy by rich and poor, Norman and Saxon. A magnificent procession was formed to accompany him to St. Paul's church, and there, after he had offered up his prayers, the barons of the kingdom, and the citizens paid him the vows of homage. He then placed his hand upon a copy of the Evangelists, and swore to restore to the country its just and righteous laws, and to each man the lands or property of which he had been despoiled.

One of the first acts of Louis was to issue a manifesto which was addressed to the king of Scotland and to all the owners of land throughout the country who were not then present in London. The result of this proclamation soon made itself apparent. Any jealousy towards a foreign prince was entirely subdued by the deep hatred with which all classes of the people regarded their king. The force of an idea was not then so great as in more recent times; the confederacy of the barons, notwithstanding the high and just cause for which they fought, was weak because it was without a powerful and recognised head. No sooner had the people a living man round whom to rally, instead of a collection of names, than they at once flocked to join his standard. Of the few nobles who had accompanied John on his marauding expeditions, nearly all quitted him at once and took their way to London; all

the people of the northern counties rose up among the ruins of their homes and cried aloud for vengeance; the king of Scotland prepared an army to march once more to the south; and the foreign mercenaries, with the exception of the Gascons and Poitevins, renounced their adhesion to the tyrant, and either quitted the country or joined the forces of Louis and the barons. Dangers thickened about the king on every side, and his abject spirit was sustained only by the consolations which Gualo, the pope's legate, poured into his ear. The legate assured him of the constant support of the pope, and exhorted him to courage, since it was impossible that any harm could happen to a prince who was under the protection of Holy Church. But now the news arrived that pope Innocent, whose efforts alone had sustained the tyrant in his power, was dead, and a considerable time elapsed before his successor was appointed.

Louis marched his forces to Dover, and laid siege to the castle which was in the hands of Hubert de Burgh, a man whose character stands so high in history that we are at a loss to understand how he should have retained his allegiance to John. He, however, proved his loyalty by maintaining a most gallant defence, and effectually repelled all the attacks of the besiegers. Mention is made of a formidable engine of war, called a *malvoisin* or *bad neighbour*, which was sent by Philip to be used by his son at the siege of Dover. Neither this engine nor the bravery of the attacking troops availed anything against the strong walls of the castle, and the obstinate defence of the garrison, and after a siege which lasted several weeks, Louis was compelled to desist from the attack, and he determined to reduce the place by famine. Meanwhile, a number of the barons had laid siege to Windsor Castle, which also made a vigorous defence. The king availed himself of the moment when they were thus occupied, to advance upon their estates, where he let loose the greedy adventurers who still remained in his pay. The barons then raised the siege to attack the king, who made a hasty retreat. Having succeeded in eluding their pursuit, he reached the town of Stamford. The barons made no attempt to molest him there, but turned and took their way to Dover, where they joined the forces of Louis.

Dover Castle still held out, and the prince pertinaciously maintained his position before it, thus losing three months of valuable time, which, had it been well employed, would doubtless have placed him in possession of the throne. In such a case, inactivity necessarily produced discontent, and other causes of complaint soon presented themselves to the English barons. Louis, who showed himself as deficient in policy as in military skill, began to treat the English with disrespect, and made grants of land and titles in England to his own countrymen. At the same time an event occurred, or was believed to have occurred—and in either case the result was the same—which was calculated to destroy at once the bonds of alliance which existed between the barons and the French prince. One of the followers of Louis, named the Viscount de Melun, being seized with illness at London, and finding himself at the point of death, earnestly desired to see those English nobles who remained in the city. When they approached his bedside, he informed them that the prince, with sixteen of his principal barons, had sworn that when the kingdom should be conquered, and Louis crowned, all the English who had joined his standard, should be banished for ever, as traitors not to be trusted, and their offspring exterminated or reduced to poverty. "Doubt not my words," De Melun said with his dying breath. "I, who lie here, about to die, was one of the conspirators." Whether this extraordinary scene did or did not take place, the report greatly increased the discontent among the barons. Several of them quitted the standard of Louis, and those who remained appear to have done so merely as the alternative of again tendering their support to John.

While such was the condition of affairs in the French camp, it is evident that there was nothing to oppose the king in his lawless course of vengeance. He advanced with his troops to Lincoln, and having made himself master of the town, he established his head-quarters there, and rallied around him fugitive bands of his mercenaries. His chief support was derived from the adherence of the seamen of the country, who appear to have remained firm in their resistance to the French invasion. Many ships laden with stores were captured by them on their way from the Continent, and thus the army of Louis found itself frequently deprived of supplies. In the month of October the king set out on another predatory excursion, which was destined to be his last. Leaving Lincoln, he passed through the district of Croyland, burning up the farm-houses attached to the abbey of that name. Then proceeding eastwards he went to Lynn and Wisbeach, whence he reached the Cross Keys, a place on the south side of the Wash. At low water, the sands of this estuary are dry, so as to admit of a passage across for horses and vehicles; but it is liable to a sudden influx of the tide. For some reason, which does not very clearly appear, John determined to cross the Wash at the Cross Keys, and in doing so he narrowly escaped the fate of Pharaoh. When his troops had nearly reached the opposite shore, they heard the roar of the rising tide. The king, alarmed, hastened his steps, and succeeded in reaching dry ground; but on looking back, he saw all the carriages and sumpter horses which carried his stores and treasure overwhelmed by the waters; the waves dashed and leaped over them, and presently carriages, horses, and men all disappeared in the whirlpool caused by the confluence of the tide, and of the current of the river Welland.

Giving vent to his rage by curses and complaints, John took his way gloomily to the Abbey of Cistercians at Swineshead, where he remained for the night. At supper he ate to excess of peaches, or pears, and drank great quantities of new cider. A story was current some fifty years later, that he was poisoned by the monks, but no allusion is made to it in the accounts of his contemporaries, and it is equally probable that his death resulted from excess, acting upon a body already fevered by excitement. He was attacked during the night by severe illness, and on mounting his horse early the next morning, he found himself unable to sit upright. A horse-litter was then procured, in which he was conveyed to the neighbouring castle of Sleaford. A burning fever, attended with acute pains, had seized upon him, and it was with great difficulty that on the following day he was carried to the castle of Newark on the Trent. The shadow of coming death now appeared upon his face, and he desired that a confessor might be sent for. The abbey of Croxton was not far distant, and on receiving the message, the abbot attended to witness the last moments of the king, and to offer him such consolation as he had to bestow. The

chroniclers describe the wretched tyrant as dying in an extremity of agony and remorse. He appointed his eldest son Henry as his successor, and a letter was written under

Dover Castle.

his direction to Honorius III., the newly elected pope, entreating protection for his children. He caused his attendants to swear fealty to Henry, and sent orders to the sheriffs and other royal officers throughout the kingdom to render the prince their obedience. In his last moments, the abbot asked where he desired that his body should be buried, and John replied, "I commit my soul to God, and my body to St. Wulstan." He died on the 18th of October, A.D. 1216, in the 49th year of his age, having reigned

seventeen years. His body was conveyed to the cathedral church of Worcester, of which St. Wulstan was the patron saint, and was there buried.

The character of John has been shown only too clearly in the records of those miserable years during which he occupied the throne. It is unquestionable that the very circumstances which entailed so much misery upon the people under his rule, were ultimately of the greatest benefit to the country, and that the cowardice and tyranny of John produced results of far more importance to the welfare of the English nation than the high military talent and abilities of his predecessors. Yet, however highly we may estimate the national blessings which have followed in the train of Magna Charta, we cannot be blind to the fact that, like every other triumph of freedom, it was bought with tears and blood. John, whose character had always been treacherous and cruel, became savage and brutal to an unprecedented degree after this charter had been wrung from him; and we look in vain for any redeeming feature in his conduct. His vices, in themselves sufficiently execrable, are partially hidden from our view by the greater prominence of his crimes, and of these the dark catalogue extends through every year in which he held the reins of power.

John's Passage of the Wash.

CHAPTER LII.

Review of Society in the Middle Ages.

THE inadequate supply, if not deficiency, of information respecting the great mass of the people in what are generally known as the dark ages, but more properly speaking as the mediæval period, has induced many writers to describe those who lived and flourished in them as rude and unenlightened barbarians.

Before proceeding in our current history, it may be advisable to test the soundness of this opinion, to present our readers with a picture drawn from records and data on which they may rely, drawn chiefly from the lately published rolls of the period.

The bases on which society rests are undoubtedly legal security for person and property, and the possession of a competent degree of wealth.

In these two requisites the mediæval period has been supposed, erroneously, as we propose to show, to be peculiarly deficient. We have been told that money was so scarce that few persons below the rank of nobles possessed aught beyond the strictly necessary, and that the life of a peasant was considered, not merely by the nobility

but by the law itself, as scarcely of more value than that of a deer.

In many instances such was but too probably the case. The fault, however, did not arise from any defect in the laws, but rather in the inefficient manner in which they were executed; and many examples are to be found in which crimes against the person were most severely punished. We find in that interesting work, the "Rolls of the King's Court," which extend from the sixth of Richard to the first of John, that a strict legal inquiry was always made in respect to those who had been found dead in the fields, and that even in cases where it was found the man perished through want, a verdict of murdrum is returned.

This does not mean murder; it is a technical law term, which involved the payment of a fine by the hundred within which the death took place. The awarding this verdict, in cases of death from starvation, is considered by Sir F. Palgrave as proving the recognition of a legal provision for the poor.

The entries in these rolls supply abundant evidence of the care with which the law watched over the lives of each member of the community, and, what may scarcely be believed, over their property too. The number of law-suits, and these not for grave offences, or entered into by persons of rank, is most remarkable and curious.

Thomas de la Marc demands damages from Geoffery de la Marc for an injury done to his house by digging a ditch. William, the vintner, Henry Basket, and Henry de Tony are fined for selling wines contrary to the statute. Golling, the son of Stouard, is charged with selling corn by short measure and wool by short weight; whilst Serle, the son of Eustace, summons Roger, the smith, before the chief justiciary for a mere beating and bruising.

Neither does it appear that even in time of war the civil power was that most ineffectual thing which many writers have supposed it. Letters of safe conduct are to be found on almost every page of the patent rolls, granted, not only to the noble or wealthy, who could always find means to travel with an efficient escort, but to the poor and humble.

There is one to Alan, the vintner of Reading, as well as to the abbess of Meanling; to Margaret de Modington and the men belonging to Walter de Lacy, with the cows and horses which were in the forest of Gillingham.

All appear to have found sufficient security to enable them to pass safely through the midst of hostile ranks.

If these illustrations of the occasional vigorous exercise of the civil law create surprise, what will be said to the many indications of wealth and comfort which are to be met in the same records?

In the enormous ransoms demanded for prisoners who fell into the hands of John during his contest with the barons, we find that the class immediately below the nobility were in possession of considerable riches.

Fulke d'Oyry paid a fine amounting to nearly five thousand pounds of our present money.

Baldwin the constable of Ermelingham's ransom was fixed at one thousand pounds—not less than fifteen at the present date.

Reginald de Cornhill's ransom was higher still, amounting to thirty thousand pounds.

The next class, too, appear to have been wealthy; Ralph de Lancel charges Hugh de Stotden, and five others, with breaking into his house, and robbing him of horses, arms, and silver vessels, to the amount of 100 marks (£1,000). Philip de Stanes is charged with having carried off "chattels" to the amount of £27, and one mark (£415), from a widow named Constantia; and the pleadings in this case make it probable that these "chattels" were the lady's plate, jewellery, and apparel. On reference to the prices of various articles of absolute luxury, we perceive not only he advancing civilisation, but the wealth of the period. Rings of one mark value (£10 present money) seem to have been an ordinary article of dress; a gold buckle, value two marks (£20), we find given on one occasion by the monarch; silks and fine cloth are valued at sums varying from £3 the yard (present value); while the price of spices is enormous, cinnamon is 2s. 6d. (£1 17s. 6d.) per ℔, ; ginger the same; nutmegs 10s. (£7 10s); mace the same price; white cloves, the highly prized "gariofilium," were actually 20s. (£15) per ℔. This list of prices is collected from the precepts in the Close Rolls: we therefore can have no doubt of its correctness. The reader would probably be surprised at the extensive list of foreign luxuries which might be compiled from this work; as well as at the large quantities of each article required for the royal kitchen. Three pounds of ginger, three of cinnamon, two of saffron, fifty pounds of pepper, and one hundred weight of almonds, is part of the order to Galfrid the salter, toward the close of each year.

No wonder was it that the de Basings, and Fitz-Marys, and Bukerels kept such state as London merchants, and challenged respect from the proudest nobles in the land. Still descending in the scale of society, we find the various classes possessed of a competent portion of wealth. Lucas Brockshewet charges one Walter "with the theft of an ox, and with carrying off Felicia his wife, his seal, and chattels to the amount of 100 shillings" (£75). Peter Holt charges John Dene with carrying off £15 in pennies (£225), and chattels of the value of 60 marks (£600). Both these men appear but as farmers; money could not therefore have been so very scarce in those days. Descending still lower, we find wayfaring men, with half a mark (£5), and 5s. (£3 15s.) in their possession, and charging their cloaks, of which they had been robbed, at 5s. also: few men in their rank of life, even in the present day, could afford to wear a cloak worth £3 15s. Even among the lowest class of farmers, William Norreys complains that his "hamsoke" was robbed of 6s. 6d. (£4 17s. 6d.) in chattels, twenty-four two year old sheep, and his house damaged to the amount of 10s. (£7 10s.) Roger Boss and his family flee away, leaving as "chattels, three oxen, three cows, two calves, twelve sheep, two horses, nine geese, and an acre and a half of corn."

An additional proof of a diffusion of wealth and comfort in the humbler classes, far beyond what has generally been supposed, may be found in the circumstance that household linen is frequently mentioned amongst them, and that sellers of wine are not only found in the chief towns, but in most of the smaller ones, especially in Essex and Hertford.

It is true that taxation had not yet been reduced to a science; the generous wines of France were imported on the payment of a duty so moderate as not to be beyond the reach of the petty trader. It was reserved for modern times to protect gin at the expense of wine, and the sin is bearing its fruit.

The popular opinion of the strict division of the higher and lower classes, and the abject slavish condition, resembling that of a Russian serf, in which it is erroneously supposed the latter were held, as well as their utter privation of all legal rights, is forcibly disproved by the Rolls of the King's Courts, in which we find many instances of servants carrying on suits against their lords, and of small freeholders bringing actions against the great nobles and landholders for unjust dispossession.

Isabel de Bennington summonses the celebrated Baron Fitzwalter, the lord of sixty-six knights' fees, for dispossessing her of her free tenement, probably little more than a cottage. Eililda, a widow, charges Thomas Fitz-Thomas with similar injustice.

In the latter instance the noble vindicated his right by asserting that her two sons were his *villeins*, or vassals; this was denied.

Although the result of the suit cannot be ascertained, it corroborates the opinion of Sir Francis Palgrave, that *villenage* was not a state of bondage.

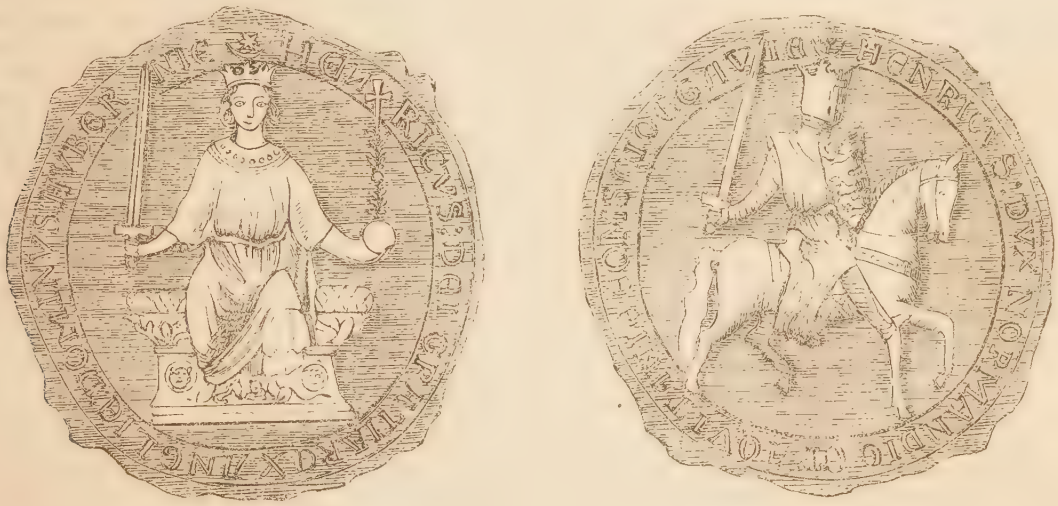
"Although, according to legal language, the villein might be given, bequeathed, or sold, these expressions, which sound so harshly, and seem so inconsistent with any degree of personal liberty, bore a meaning essentially different from that which we would now assign them. In no instance can we find the ceorl or villein separate from his land. He was always a *villein appurtenant;* and notwithstanding the language employed, the gift, bequest, or sale, was the disposition of the land and his services."*

Does not the view of this able writer derive confirmation from that very passage in the Annals of Dunstable so frequently brought forward to prove that slavery then existed; and which records, in the year 1283, that "we sold our slave by birth, Willliam Pike, and all his family, for one mark." Surely £10 present money would have been altogether inadequate to the purchase of *one* person. Is it not therefore evident that this one mark was a mere fine, paid on the transference of the land held by William Pike, and by consequence his services, which were in lieu of rent.

Another instance that the villein was capable of exercising the right of a freeman may be found in the case of Ralph Clair, in which it was decided that he could not hold land, and that he be amerced for making the claim.

Here the judge, Geoffrey Fitz-Peter, imposes a pecuniary fine on one of a class which we have been told, on grave authority, had no legal right to the possession of money.

The very curious entries in the "Boulden book," which records the inquisition made by Hugh Pudsey, bishop of Durham, in 1183, corroborate this view of the subject. The villeins of Boldenare held each thirty acres of land, and their payments are partly in service, partly in kind, and partly in *money*. In Southbydyk the villeins held their *ville* in farm, and find "eight score men to reap in autumn; thirty-six wagons to carry the corn; and they beside pay £5." Many of the entries in this ancient document are very curious; at harvest time it is determined that the whole household shall turn out to work, "*exceptâ husewifâ*," and this respectful attention to the mistress of the house is repeated in every entry.



Great Seal of Henry III.

CHAPTER LIII.

Accession of Henry III., and the Difficulties of his Position—His Coronatio—Regency of the Earl of Pembroke—The Departure of Louis from the kingdom.

Henry III., or, as he was more generally designated, Henry of Winchester, was only ten years of age when the death of his father called him to the throne. It was almost an empty honour, the kingdom being in a most distracted state. London and the southern counties acknowledged the authority of his rival Louis, to whom the king of Scotland and the Welsh prince had taken the oath of fealty as vassals.

In this position there were only two parties on whom the youthful monarch could rely for any effectual support: the first consisted of the barons and foreign mercenaries who had remained faithful to the late king; the second was the papal see, which, since the degrading surrender of the crown by John, considered itself lord paramount of England, and in that capacity naturally exerted all its influence to secure the succession to the son of him who had bestowed upon it so rich a gift.

About ten days after the death of his father, Henry was

* *Vide* Sir F. Palgrave's "English Commonwealth."

conducted to the abbey church of Gloucester; and having taken the coronation oath, and sworn fealty to the reigning pope, Honorius, was crowned by his legate Gualo and the bishops of Winchester, Exeter, and Bath, who placed upon his head a simple circlet of gold, the regal crown having been lost with the rest of the royal treasures in the disastrous passage of the Wash.

Immediately after this ceremony a proclamation was issued in which the boy king lamented the dissensions between his father and the barons, which he professed his willingness to forget, offered to his subjects a full amnesty for the past, and their liberties, as secured by the great charter, for the future. He also commanded the tenants of the crown to do homage to him for their possessions, and take the oath of allegiance. During a month the people were forbidden to appear in public without a white fillet round the head in honour of his coronation. The care of Henry's person was confided to the earl of Pembroke, earl marshal of England, who was also named guardian of the kingdom.

Well did this illustrious nobleman merit the confidence reposed in him. It was owing to his loyalty and energy that the foreigners were driven from the kingdom.

The earl, in order that he might reconcile all orders in the state to the government of the new king, made him grant a fresh charter, which, though copied in most instances from the one extorted from John, contained several exceptions.

The privilege of elections granted to the clergy was not confirmed, nor the liberty of withdrawing from the kingdom without the consent of the crown.

In this omission we may perceive the germ of resistance to the supremacy of Rome. Even at a period when it was most necessary to conciliate its influence in favour of the young king, both the regent and the barons of the party were desirous of reserving the right of the crown to issue the *congé d'elire* to the monks and chapters, as some check upon the encroachments of the papacy.

But the greatest change was the omitting of the obligations to which John had subscribed, binding himself not to levy any aids or scutages, as they were termed, upon the nation, without the consent of the great council: the article was even pronounced severe, and was expressly left to future deliberation.

When at a later period of his reign Henry was severely pressed for money, he never attempted by his mere will to exact any such imposts, though reduced to great necessity, and the supplies refused by the people. The barons would have opposed it. True, they were subservient enough where individual rights alone were trampled on, but when the interests of the whole body were affected, they offered a formidable opposition to the oppression of the crown.

This charter was confirmed by the king in the following year, and several additional articles added to prevent the oppressions of the sheriffs. The forest laws were modified: those which had been enclosed since the reign of Henry II., were thrown open; offences against the game laws were declared no longer capital, but punished by fine and imprisonment.

These last ameliorations were made in a separate charter.

These charters were, during many generations, regarded by the nation as the palladium of their liberties; securing, as they did, the rights of all orders of men, they were zealously defended by all, and became the basis of a contract which limited the authority of the king, and ensured the conditional allegiance of the people. Though often violated, they were still appealed to; and as no precedent was supposed to invalidate them, they acquired, rather than lost, authority in the frequent attempts to set them aside which were made in after ages by royal and arbitrary power.

Whilst the earl of Pembroke by these wise proceedings gave so much satisfaction to the nation in general, he made great personal efforts to recall the revolted barons to their allegiance by writing in the king's name to each.

In his letters he reminded them that whatever cause of offence John might have given them, his son, who had succeeded to the crown, inherited neither his principles nor resentments; that he was the lineal heir of their ancient kings; and pointed out how desperate was the expedient they had employed of calling in a foreign potentate; an expedient which, happily for them and the nation, had failed of success; that it was still in their power by a speedy return to their duty to restore the independence of the kingdom, and those liberties for which they had so zealously contended; adding, that as all their past offences were now buried in oblivion, they ought, on their part, to show equal magnanimity, and forget their complaints against their late sovereign, who, if he had been in any way blamable in his conduct, had left to his successor the salutary warning to avoid the paths which had led to such fatal and dangerous extremities.

The considerations so temperately, yet strongly, urged, enforced by the high character for honour and consistency which Pembroke had ever maintained, had great influence with the barons, many of whom began secretly to negotiate with him, whilst others returned openly to their allegiance.

The suspicion which Louis discovered of their fidelity, forwarded this general inclining towards the king, and when at last he refused the government of the castle of Hertford to Robert Fitzwalter, one of his most faithful adherents, who claimed that fortress as his property, they plainly saw that the English nobility were to be systematically excluded from every position of trust, and that his own countrymen and foreigners engrossed all the confidence and affection of their new sovereign.

The excommunication, too, which the legate of the pope had pronounced against all the adherents of Louis, was not without effect. Men were easily convinced of the impiety of a cause which it was their interest to abandon.

Louis, who on the death of John had deemed his triumph certain, found on the contrary that it had given an incurable wound to his cause. On his return from France, where he had been to recruit his forces, he discovered his party among the English barons considerably weakened. The earls of Salisbury, Arundel, and Warrenne, together with William Mareschall, eldest son of the earl of Pembroke, had returned to their natural allegiance, and the nobles who remained were only waiting an occasion to follow their example.

The regent felt himself so much strengthened by these accessions to the royal cause, that he resolved no longer to remain on the defensive, but at once proceeded to invest Mount Sorel; but on the approach of the count de la

Perche with the French army, he raised the siege, his forces not being sufficient to oppose him.

Elated with this success, the count marched to Lincoln, and being admitted within the walls, proceeded at once to attack the castle, which he soon reduced to great extremity. Fully sensible of the importance of relieving the place, the gallant Pembroke summoned all his forces from every quarter of the kingdom which owned the authority of Henry; and with such alacrity were his orders obeyed, that in a short time he marched upon Lincoln with an army superior in numbers to the French, who, in their turn, shut themselves within the walls. The earl reinforced the garrison, which made a vigorous assault upon the besiegers, whilst, with his own army, he, at the same time, attacked the town, which the English entered, sword in hand, bearing down all opposition. Lincoln was given up to pillage, the French being totally defeated.

It is singular that the only persons slain were the count de la Perche and two of his officers, but many of the principal leaders and upwards of four hundred knights were taken prisoners; and yet this battle, if it may be considered worthy of the name, decided the fate of the kingdom.

Louis heard of this event, so fatal to his ambitious projects, while engaged in the siege of Dover, which, under the command of Hubert de Burgh, still held out against him, and instantly retreated to London, the stronghold of his party. Shortly after his arrival, intelligence was brought him of a fresh disaster, which completely put an end to his hopes of the conquest of England.

His consort, Blanche of Castile, had levied powerful reinforcements in France, which she had embarked in eighty large vessels, besides galleys and smaller ships, under the command of a noted pirate named Eustace le Moine.

To meet this formidable danger, Hubert de Burgh, the justiciary, collected forty sail from the cinque ports, and set out to sea to meet the enemy. So inferior was his force that several knights refused to follow him, alleging as a reason, or rather an excuse for their cowardice, that they were unacquainted with naval warfare, and bound only to fight on land by the tenure of their lands. The gallant leader seems to have been perfectly aware of the danger he courted, since, according to Lingard, he privately received the sacrament, and nobly gave orders to the garrison of Dover castle not to surrender on any terms to the enemy, in the event of his being defeated—not even to save his own life, should it be threatened.

It was on this occasion that Hubert executed one of those extraordinary feats which only true genius can conceive. On coming in sight of the French fleet, he commanded his own ships to sail past them, as if he intended to surprise Calais. The enemy saw him pass them with shouts of derision.

To their astonishment, however, the English fleet suddenly tacked, and, with the wind in their favour, bore down upon them in a line on their rear. The battle began with volleys of arrows, which, most probably, did little execution on either side. It was when they came in close contact that the superiority of the British sailors was shown. With chains and hooks they lashed their vessels to those of the enemy; then scattered clouds of quicklime in the air, which the wind carried in the eyes of the French, half blinding them, and rendered their ships unmanageable by cutting their rigging with their axes.

The struggle was not a long one. The French, unused to this desperate mode of fighting, made but a feeble resistance; and of their immense fleet fifteen vessels only escaped; the rest were either sunken or taken.

One hundred and fifteen knights, with their esquires, and upwards of eight hundred officers were prisoners. Eustace le Moine, their leader, had concealed himself in the hold of his ship. When discovered he offered a large sum for his life. But Richard Fitzroy, one of John's illegitimate sons by a daughter of earl Warrenne, rejected the proposal, and instantly struck off his head, which was afterwards stuck upon a pole and carried from town to town as a trophy of victory.

Hume, in his account of this great naval battle, assigns the command of the fleet to Philip d'Albiney; whilst Lingard, who is generally so accurate with respect to names and dates, distinctly states that Hubert de Burgh held that important post. It is more than probable that both the above-mentioned leaders were on board; in which case the supreme authority would have been in the hands of Hubert, as grand justiciary of the kingdom. In our own views, we incline to the last-named historian's account of the event.

After this signal triumph the barons who still adhered to the cause of Louis hastened to make their peace, in order to prevent the attainders which longer resistance might have brought upon them, and the French prince, seeing that his affairs were desperate, began to feel anxious for the safety of his person, and most desirous of withdrawing from a country where everything wore a hostile aspect to him. He concluded a treaty with the earl of Pembroke, by which he promised to quit the kingdom, merely stipulating an indemnity to the adherents who remained faithful to him, a restitution of their honours and fortunes, as well as the enjoyment of those liberties which had been granted in the late charter to the rest of the nation.

Thus, owing to the great prudence and loyalty of the regent, was ended a civil war which at one time threatened to subjugate England to a foreign yoke.

The precautions which the king of France, the father of Louis, took in the affair, are most remarkable. He asserted that the prince had accepted the invitation of the English barons without his advice, and contrary to his wishes; the forces sent to England were all levied in the name of Louis, and when he came over to France to solicit aid, his father publicly refused him the least assistance, and would not so much as receive him in his presence; and after the successes of Henry had placed the heir to his throne in a position of great danger, it was Blanche of Castile, his wife, and not the king his father, who raised the forces and equipped the fleet which Hubert de Burgh defeated.

These artifices were too transparent not to be seen through. But the politic monarch was better pleased that the truth should be veiled under a decent pretext than exposed to the gaze of the world. Neither the pope nor the English nation were deceived by his professions of neutrality.

After the expulsion of the French, the prudence and equity of the protector's subsequent conduct contributed to

cure entirely those wounds which had been made by intestine discord. He received the rebellious barons into favour; observed strictly the terms of peace which he had granted them; restored them to their possessions; and endeavoured, by an equal behaviour, to bury all past animosities in perpetual oblivion. The clergy alone, who had adhered to Louis, were sufferers in this revolution. As they had to the legate, who amassed an immense treasure by this expedient.

The earl of Pembroke did not long survive the pacification which had been chiefly owing to his wisdom and valour; and he was succeeded in the government by Peter des Roches, bishop of Winchester, and Hubert de Burgh, the justiciary. The counsels of the latter were chiefly

Henry III. and the Earl of Pembroke.

rebelled against their spiritual sovereign, by disregarding the interdict and excommunication, it was not in Pembroke's power to make any stipulations in their favour; and Gualo, the legate, prepared to take vengeance on them for their disobedience. Many of them were deposed; many suspended; some banished, and all who escaped punishment made atonement for their offence by paying large sums followed; and had he possessed equal authority in the kingdom with Pembroke, he seemed to be every way worthy of filling the place of that virtuous nobleman. But the licentious and powerful barons, who had once broken the reins of subjection to their prince, and had obtained by violence an enlargement of their liberties and independence, could ill be restrained by laws under a minority; and the people,

no less than the king, suffered from their outrages and disorders. They retained by force the royal castles, which they had seized during the past convulsions, or which had

The Barons enforcing their rights from Henry III. (See page 273).

been committed to their custody by the protector; they usurped the king's demesnes; they oppressed their vassals; they infested their weaker neighbours; they invited all disorderly people to enter in their retinue, and to live upon their lands; and they gave them protection in all their robberies and extortions.

No one was more infamous for these violent and illegal practices than the earl of Albemarle; who, though he had early returned to his duty, and had been serviceable in expelling the French, augmented to the utmost the general disorder, and committed outrages in all the counties of the

north. In order to reduce him to obedience, Hubert seized an opportunity of getting possession of Rockingham castle, which Albemarle had garrisoned with his licentious retinue; but this nobleman, instead of submitting, entered into a secret confederacy with Fawkes de Brianté, Peter de Mouleon, and other barons; fortified the castle of Beham for his defence, and made himself master of that of Fotheringay. Pandulph, who had been re-appointed legate, showed great activity in the suppression of this rebellion. With the consent of eleven bishops he pronounced sentence of excommunication against Albemarle and his adherents; an army was levied; a scutage of ten shillings, a knight's fee, was imposed on all the military tenants.

Albemarle's adherents, terrified by the vigour of these proceedings, gradually deserted him, and he himself was reduced to sue for mercy. Such was his influence, and the unsettled state of the nation, that he not only received a free pardon, but was restored to his whole estate.

This lenity, which was highly impolitic, was most probably owing to some secret combination amongst the turbulent barons, who could not endure to see the total ruin of one of their own order. It had the bad effect of encouraging Fawkes de Brianté, one of John's unworthy favourites, who had risen from an obscure estate, to persevere in the course of violence and rapine to which he owed his fortune, and set at defiance the laws of the realm.

When thirty-five verdicts had been found against him for forcibly depriving the same number of freeholders of their estates, he came into the court-house accompanied by an armed force; seized the person of the judge who had presided, and imprisoned him in Bedford castle, to the great scandal of the nation. He next levied open war against the crown; but being defeated and taken prisoner, his lands were confiscated, and he himself banished the kingdom.

If justice was thus blind or powerless where the culprits were noble, great severity was exercised upon the humbler classes. A riot occurred at a wrestling match between the citizens of London and the inhabitants of Westminster, in which the former destroyed several houses belonging to the abbot of the last-named place. Probably it might have passed unnoticed, but for certain symptoms which the citizens displayed towards the French, making use of the French war-cry, "Montjoy! Montjoy, and God help us and our lord Louis!" This was the real offence for which they were punished. The justiciary made inquiry into the transaction, and proceeded against one Constantine Fitz-Arnulf, one of the ringleaders, and by martial law ordered him to be hanged without any other form of trial. He also cut off the feet of some of his accomplices.

This act of cruelty, which tarnished the fair fame of Hubert, was also an infringement of the great charter; yet the same justiciary, in a parliament which was held at Oxford, granted a confirmation of the charter in the king's name.

The state of weakness into which the crown had fallen made it imperative for the ministers to use every exertion for the preservation of what remained of the royal prerogative, as well as to insure the public liberties. Hubert applied to the pope, the lord paramount of England, to issue a bull by which Henry was declared of age and entitled to govern. It was granted, and the justiciary resigned into the hands of the youthful sovereign the important fortresses of the Tower of London and Dover castle, which had been committed to his custody, and at the same time called upon those barons who held similar trusts to imitate his example.

The nobles refused compliance, and the earls of Chester and Albemarle, John de Lacy, Brian de L'Isle, and William de Cautel even entered into a conspiracy to surprise London, and assembled in arms at Waltham with that intention; but finding the king prepared to meet them, they at last desisted from their intention.

When summoned to appear at court to answer for their conduct, the rebels appeared, and not only confessed their design, but told Henry that though they had no bad intentions against his person, they were determined to remove the justiciary Hubert de Burgh from his office.

A second time they met in arms at Leicester with the same intention, but the primate and bishops finding everything tending towards civil war, interposed their authority, and menaced them with excommunication if they persisted in detaining the king's castles. This threat prevailed, and most of the fortresses were surrendered.

The barons complained bitterly that the justiciary's castle was soon afterwards restored to him, whilst theirs were retained.

There were 1115 of these strongholds, according to Hume, at that time in the kingdom.

This is one of the instances in which the influence of the clergy was exerted for the service of the nation. It is true that many of the prelates were little better than the feudal barons; that great corruptions had crept into the church; that the assumption by the papacy of the suzerainty of England was against all law and common sense. Still the great sway they held over the people kept the community from falling back into a state of anarchy and confusion. It threw authority into the hands of men who, by their profession, were adverse to arms and deeds of violence, and who still maintained, amid civil war and the shock of arms, those secret links without which it is impossible for human society to exist.

Notwithstanding the disturbed state of his kingdom, Henry found himself obliged to carry on war against France, and for this purpose employed the subsidy of a fifteenth which had been granted him by parliament.

His former rival, now king of that country under the title of Louis VIII., instead of complying with Henry's claim for Normandy, which he had promised to restore, entered Poitou, took Rochelle, after an obstinate siege, and seemed determined to expel the English from such provinces as remained to them in France.

The king sent over his uncle, the earl of Salisbury, and his brother, prince Richard, whom he had created earl of Cornwall. They succeeded in arresting the progress of Louis, and retained the Poitevin and Gascon vassals in their allegiance, but no great action was fought on either side.

The earl of Cornwall, after remaining two years in Guienne, returned to England.

This prince was nowise turbulent or factious in his disposition: his ruling passion was to amass money, in which he succeeded so well as to become the richest subject in Christendom; yet his attention to gain threw him sometimes into acts of violence, and gave great disturbance to the government. There was a manor, which had formerly

belonged to the earldom of Cornwall, but had been granted to Waleran de Ties before Richard had been invested with that dignity, and while the earldom remained in the crown. Richard claimed this manor, and expelled the proprietor by force: Waleran complained: the king ordered his brother to do justice to the man, and restore him to his rights: the earl said that he would not submit to these orders, till the cause should be decided against him by the judgment of his peers: Henry replied, that it was first necessary to reinstate Waleran in possession, before the cause could be tried; and he reiterated his orders to the earl. We may judge of the state of the government, when this affair had nearly produced a civil war. The earl of Cornwall, finding Henry peremptory in his commands, associated himself with the young earl of Pembroke, who had married his sister, and who was displeased on account of the king's requiring him to deliver up some royal castles which were in his custody, These two malcontents took into the confederacy the earls of Chester, Warrenne, Gloucester, Hereford, Warwick, and Ferrers, who were all disgusted on a like account. They assembled an army, which the king had not the power or courage to resist; and he was obliged to give his brother satisfaction, by grants of much greater importance than the manor, which had been the first ground of the quarrel.

The character of the king, as he grew to man's estate, became every day better known; and he was found in every respect unqualified for maintaining a proper sway among those turbulent barons, whom the feudal constitution subjected to his authority. Gentle, humane, and merciful even to a fault, he seems to have been steady in no other circumstance of his character; but to have received every impression from those who surrounded him, and whom he loved, for the time, with the most imprudent and most unreserved affection. Without activity or vigour, he was unfit to conduct war; without policy or art, he was ill fitted to maintain peace; his resentments, though hasty and violent, were not dreaded, while he was found to drop them with such facility; his friendships were little valued, because they were neither derived from choice, nor maintained with constancy. A proper pageant of state in a regular monarchy, where his ministers could have conducted all affairs in his name and by his authority; but too feeble in those disorderly times to sway a sceptre, whose weight depended entirely on the firmness of the hand which held it. The ablest and most virtuous monitor that ever Henry possessed, was Hubert de Burgh, a man who had been faithful to the crown in the most difficult and dangerous times, and yet showed no desire, even when at the height of power, to enslave or oppress the people.

The only exceptionable part of his conduct is that mentioned by Matthew Paris, of the credibility of which, however, grave doubts may be urged; namely, that it was by his advice the forest charter was annulled, a concession so wise in itself, and so passionately desired both by the nobility and people.

Hubert's share in this unpopular act is most unlikely, both from his character and the circumstances of the times, and there is every reason to doubt its reality, especially as it is asserted by no other historian. This great man while he enjoyed his authority had an entire ascendancy over Henry, and was loaded with honours and favours beyond any other subject. Besides acquiring the property of many castles and manors, he married the eldest sister of the king of Scots, was created earl of Kent, and, by an unusual concession, was made chief justiciary of England for life: yet Henry, in a sudden caprice, threw off this faithful minister, and exposed him to the violent persecutions of his enemies. Among other frivolous crimes objected to him, he was accused of gaining the king's affections by enchantment, and of purloining from the royal treasury a gem, which had the virtue to render the wearer invulnerable, and of sending this valuable curiosity to the prince of Wales. The nobility, who hated Hubert on account of his zeal in resuming the rights and possessions of the crown, no sooner saw the opportunity favourable, than they inflamed the king's animosity against him, and pushed him to seek the total ruin of his minister. Hubert took sanctuary in a church: the king ordered him to be dragged from thence: he recalled those orders: he afterwards renewed them: he was obliged by the clergy to restore him to the sanctuary: he constrained him soon after to surrender himself prisoner, and he confined him in the castle of Devizes. Hubert made his escape, was expelled the kingdom, was again received into favour, recovered a great share of the king's confidence, but never showed any inclination to re-instate himself in power and authority.

The man who succeeded him in the government of the kingdom and the favour of the king, was Peter, bishop of Winchester, a Poitevin by birth, a prelate who had been greatly favoured by John, and was no less distinguished by his arbitrary principles than by his great courage and abilities. He had been nominated justiciary and regent of England by king John, during an expedition which that monarch made into France; and there is little doubt that his illegal and oppressive administration was one of the causes of that combination amongst the barons which finally extorted from the crown the magna charta, and laid the foundation of the English constitution.

Henry, though incapable, from the weakness of his character, of pursuing the same violent course as his father had done, inherited all his abitrary principles, and, by the advice of his new minister, invited over to England a great number of Poitevins and other foreigners, upon whom he conferred offices of considerable trust, as a means of counterbalancing the power of his nobility. Every post was confided to these strangers, who exhausted the revenues of the crown and invaded the rights of the people, till their insolence, which was even more offensive than their power, drew on them the hatred and envy of all classes of men throughout the kingdom.

In this crisis the barons acted in a manner worthy of the descendants of those who had wrung the charter of English freedom from the hands of the tyrant John. Their first act of open opposition to this odious ministry was to withdraw in a body from parliament, under pretence that they were exposed to danger from the machinations of these foreigners.

When again summoned to attend they demanded that the king should dismiss them, otherwise they boldly declared they would drive both him and them out of the kingdom, and place the crown upon the head of one more worthy to wear it. And when, at last, they did make their appearance in parliament, it was so well attended that they seemed in a condition to prescribe laws both to the king and minister.

Peter des Roches had, however, in the meantime found means of sowing dissension amongst them, and found means of bringing over to his party the earls of Cornwall, Lincoln, and Chester. The patriot barons were disconcerted in their measures. Doubt crept in amongst them; they no longer acted in unity.

Richard, the earl marshal, who had succeeded to that dignity on the death of his brother William, was chased into Wales, from whence he withdrew to Ireland, where he was barbarously murdered by the contrivance of the bishop of Winchester. The estates of the more obnoxious barons were confiscated without any legal sentence or trial by the peers, and bestowed with profuse liberality upon the Poitevins.

Peter had even the insolence to say that the barons of England must not presume to put themselves on an equality with the barons of France. or assume the same liberties and privileges, the king of the former country having a more absolute power than the latter.

When the king at any time was checked in his illegal proceedings, and the authority of the great charter invoked, he was wont to reply—

"Why should I observe this charter, which is violated by all my nobles and prelates?"

On one occasion it was said to him—

"You ought, sire, to set them the example."

In the opposition of the nobility, and the discontent of the people, we may trace the slow but gradual growth of civil liberty. True, the struggle for absolute power was frequently renewed, and sometimes with success, but that success was only temporary. The nation never really gave way; and once more the church came to the aid of the nation. Edmond, the primate, came to court, attended by many other prelates, and represented to the king the injustice of the measures pursued by Peter des Roches, the discontent and sufferings of the people, the ruin of his affairs, and after demanding the dismission of the obnoxious minister, threatened him with excommunication in the event of a refusal.

Henry, who knew that in the event of the primate carrying his threat into execution the entire nation would side against him, was compelled to submit; the foreigners were banished from the kingdom, and the English restored to their places in the council.

The primate, who was a prudent man, took care to execute the laws, and observe the charter of liberties. He bore the chief sway in the government.

CHAPTER LIV.

Continuation of the Reign of Henry III.—His Courtships—Marriage with Eleanor of Provence.

During the years which preceded the marriage of Henry, much discontent prevailed in England on account of the heavy taxes which continued to be imposed, although the refractory barons were subdued and the mercenary troops dismissed.

The hostility of the king to the great charter, which he had so solemnly confirmed, excited the indignation of the people. The forest charter, for which the nation had paid one-fifteenth on all movables—a proof how eagerly they desired it—was scarcely more respected.

The marriage of Henry was negotiated no less than four times with as many different princesses, and as frequently broken off.

With the last of these ladies, Joanna, daughter of the earl of Ponthieu, the treaty had proceeded so far that the pope was applied to for a dispensation, the parties being *fourth* cousins, when the caprice of the intended bridegroom broke off the match.

His contract with the lady Joanna appears to have been regarded by him with no more sense of honour than his oaths to maintain the charters had been; and we find him, even before his ambassadors had commenced proceedings at the court of Rome, writing to the earl of Surrey, soliciting his kind offices in furthering a marriage with one of the daughters of his brother-in-law, Raymond, earl of Provence.

This letter was written in June, and in July he despatched instructions to his representatives at Rome, directing them to suspend all negotiations for the present, and at the same time commanding them to observe the most profound secrecy respecting it.

In the prosecution of this fifth project of marriage, Henry seems to have used every exertion to ensure success. He wrote letters both to the father and mother of his new choice, and sent an embassy, consisting of the prior of Harle, the bishops of Ely and Hereford, and Robert de Sandford, master of the Temple, to solicit the hand of their second daughter, who, although only twelve years of age, was already celebrated on account of her extreme beauty.

The house with which the king now sought alliance was, undoubtedly, one of the most illustrious in Europe. Its remote ancestors were the counts of Barcelona; but it was by Raymond Berenger, the first earl, or, as he is sometimes called, king of Provence, that the foundation of its greatness was laid.

After rendering himself celebrated both as a warrior and a statesman, he died in 1131, and his estates were now governed by his great-grandson, Raymond the Third.

Provence was distinguished very early for the honourable encouragement it gave to literature, especially the art of poetry; and so generally were her claims to superiority in this respect admitted, that Provençal became the popular term to distinguish the poetry of the *langue d'oc* from that of the *langue d'oil:*

Richly, if we may judge from its effects, did the counts of Provence recompense the poets of their country; for so munificent were their gifts to the troubadours who sought their court at Arles, that they gradually became impoverished.

The poets have invented a singular legend to account for the subsequent wealth of Raymond. It was the least they could do to recompense him for his extravagant liberality in their favour; and a century later the legend found a place in that receptacle of religious tales and romances known as the "Gesta Romanorum."

When Raymond, driven to despair by the sight of his empty coffers, was puzzling his brain with schemes for refilling them, a pilgrim, "*de fort bonne mine*,"* says the abbé de Ruffi, to whom we are indebted for the story, came to the palace on his return from a pilgrimage to St. James.

This stranger, after partaking the hospitality of the count for some days, inquired into the value of his lands, the state of his finances, and finally offered to free him from every difficulty in a short time, provided that he was placed in absolute

* Of a very agreeable appearance.

superintendence of all his affairs. To this proposal Raymond readily acceded, and the unknown pilgrim was forthwith placed in supreme authority over the household. And well did the stranger perform his promise;—ere long, Raymond was freed from his embarrassments, and in a few years his coffers overflowed with wealth. But now gratitude began to fade from the fickle mind of the count, and he listened to the suspicious hints of his servants; until, altogether forgetful of the great benefits he had received at the hands of the unknown pilgrim, he commanded him to render up his accounts. The pilgrim made no objection—he exhibited his statements, and proved the integrity of his conduct so fully, that even his bitterest enemies could not answer a word. He then resumed his staff, scrip, and mantle, and, in despite of every entreaty of the repentant count, disappeared. Long, strict, and minute search was made after him; but he was never heard of more.

The visit of this friendly pilgrim, we may suppose, was subsequently to Raymond's marriage of his daughter Eleanor, since Matthew Paris represents him as an "illustrious and valiant man; but, through continual wars, almost all he had had vanished from his treasury." The proposal, therefore, of the king of England was peculiarly grateful both to Raymond and to his wife Beatrix of Savoy, whose three brothers looked anxiously, even from the commencement of their niece's marriage treaty, to the broad lands and rich church preferment which they anticipated they should soon possess in wealthy but ill-governed England. It was therefore with eager joy that the proposal of Henry was accepted by the needy count; and with equally eager joy, judging from his haste, did the king transmit his instructions for the marriage articles. In these he assigns to Eleanor, as dower, "those cities, lands, and tenements, which it has been customary for other kings, our predecessors, to assign to other queens." He then proceeds to state, that if Isabel should survive him, and should have recovered her dower, "then his procurators shall assign to Eleanor these towns—Gloster, Cambridge, and Huntingdon, and the villages of Wych, Basingstoke, Andover, Chiltham, Gumester, Clynes, Kingston, Ospringe, and Ludingland, to hold meanwhile;" and after Isabel's death, Eleanor in that case taking the usual dower, these towns and lands should revert to the king. In respect to Eleanor's portion, which is stated to be 20,000 marks, he directs his embassy to agree with the count that the sum shall not be less than that promised; and in a subsequent instrument he grants full power to the procurators to receive it. In the secret instructions which immediately follow, Henry seems to have apprehended, that if he pressed the count for immediate payment of his daughter's portion, he might lose his fifth chance of obtaining a wife.

He therefore directs that if his procurators cannot fulfil his commands to the very letter, they shall "over and above every power contained in the aforesaid letters, without the payment of the money appropriated for us, in whatever way ye can, take her with you, and safely and securely bring her to us in England." The youthful princess was accordingly placed in the hands of the ambassadors, and amidst the rejoicings of the whole kingdom of Provence, she set forth accompanied by a gallant cavalcade, in which were more than three hundred ladies on horseback. Her route lay through Navarre and France.

A romantic trait, illustrating the chivalrous feeling of the age, is recorded by Matthew Paris. The poet king of Navarre, Thibaut the Seventh, whose songs are still remembered in the land over which he reigned, no sooner heard that the daughter of the minstrel-loving Raymond was to pass through his dominions, than he gallantly summoned a goodly array of men at arms, and joyfully made ready to accompany her for five days through his lands, defraying every expense both for horses and men, although the royal train amounted to many hundreds.

When Eleanor arrived on the frontier of France, she received a hospitable welcome from the queen dowager and her son, who a short time previously had married an elder sister of the bride. The marriage train finally reached Dover, from whence it proceeded to Canterbury, where Henry awaited their coming. It was in that ancient city that the union took place, the service being performed by the archbishop Edmund and the prelates who accompanied Eleanor. From Canterbury, the newly-wedded pair set out for London, attended by a splendid array of nobles, prelates, knights, and ladies. On the 20th of January, being the feast of St. Fabian and St. Sebastian, Eleanor was crowned at Westminster with great splendour.

The historian Matthew Paris describes, not only the gallant array of the royal procession, but the gorgeous appearance which, even at that early period, was made by the city of London, with a minuteness which entitles him to the gratitude of every lover of antiquity:—

"There had assembled together so great a number of the nobility of both sexes, so great a number of the religious orders, so great a concourse of the populace, and so great a variety of players, that London could scarcely contain them in her capacious bosom. Therefore was the city adorned with silk hangings, and with banners, crowns, palls, tapers, and lamps, and with certain marvellous ingenuities and devices; all the streets being cleaned from dirt, mud, sticks, and everything offensive.

"The citizens of London going to meet the king and queen, ornamented and trapped and wondrously sported their swift horses; and on the same day, they went from the city to Westminster, that they might discharge the service of butler to the king in his coronation, which is acknowledged to belong to them of ancient right.

"They went in well marshalled array, adorned in silken vestments, wrapped in gold-woven mantles, with fancifully devised garments, sitting on valuable horses, refulgent with new bits and saddles: and they bore three hundred and sixty gold and silver cups, the king's trumpeters going before and sounding their trumpets; so that so wonderful a novelty produced a laudable astonishment in the spectators."

The worthy monk of St. Albans dilates with great gusto upon the splendour of the feast, and the order of the service of the different vassals of the crown, many of whom are called upon at a coronation to perform certain peculiar services down to the present day. He also remarks, with great complacency, that the abbot of his own convent took precedence of every other abbot in England at the dinner.

The following further and probably more accurate account is extracted from the city records. They are deeply interesting, as offering the earliest account of the ceremonies used at the coronation of a queen consort of England.

"In the 20th year of the reign of king Henry, son of king

John, queen Eleanor, daughter of the earl of Provence, was crowned at Westminster, on the Sunday before the Purification, the king wearing his crown, and the bishops assisting. And these served in order, in that most elegant and unheard-of feast. The bishop of Chichester, the chancellor, with the cup of precious stones, which was one of the ancient regalia of the king, clothed in his pontificals, preceded the king; who was clad in royal attire, and wearing the crown. Hugh de Pateshall walked before with the patine, clothed in a dalmatica; and the earls of Chester, Lincoln, and Warren, bearing the swords, preceded him. But the two renowned knights, Sir Richard Siward and Sir Nicholas de Molis, carried the two royal sceptres before the king; and the square purple cloth of silk, which was supported upon four silver lances, with four little bells of silver gilt, held over the king wherever he walked, was carried by the barons of the cinque ports; four being assigned to each lance, from the diversity of ports, that one port should not seem to be preferred before the other. The same in like manner bore a cloth of silk over the queen, walking behind the king, which said cloths they claimed to be theirs by right, and obtained them. And William de Beauchamp of Bedford, who had the office of almoner from times of old, found the striped cloth or *burel*, which was laid down under the king's feet, as he went from the hall as far as the pulpit of the church of Westminster; and that part of the cloth that was *within* the church always fell to the sexton, in whatever church the king was crowned; and all that was *without* the church was distributed among the poor, by the hands of William the almoner.

"At the king's table, on the right hand of the king, sat the archbishops, bishops, and certain abbots, who wished to be privileged at table; and on the left hand sat the earls, and some barons, although very few; but none claimed their seats by any right. And on that day the office of seneschal was served by Simon de Montfort, earl of Leicester, to whom that office by right belonged; and the office of the napery was that day served by Henry of Hastings, whose right it was of old to serve.

"Walter de Beauchamp, of Hammerlegh, laid the salt-cellar and the knives, and after the banquet was at an end received them as his fee.

"The earl Warren served the office of butler in the stead of Hugh de Albiniac, earl of Arundel: and under him was

Henry III.

Michael Belot, whose right it was as secondary to hold the cup well replenished with wine to the earl of Arundel, to be presented by that nobleman to the king when he be the assistant to the chief butler, as the city of Winchester is represented in the same way in the kitchen to assist the high steward.

Banquet at the Marriage of Henry III. and Eleanor of Provence.

might require it. Andrew Benkerel, who served the office of mayor of London from 1231 to 1237, was at Westminster to serve in the butlery, with the three hundred and sixty gold and silver cups, because the city of London is held to

"The mayor, it seems, claimed Michael Belot's place of standing before the king, but was repulsed by Henry, who decided that the former should serve him.

"After the banquet the earl butler had the king's

cup as his fee, and his assistant the earl's robe as his right.

"William de Beauchamp that day served the office of almoner, and had entire jurisdiction relative to the disputes and offences of the poor and lepers: so that if one leper struck another with a knife, he could adjudge him to be burnt.

"After the banquet was finished, he received, as his right, the silver dish for alms that stood before the king; and he claimed to have one tun of wine in right of alms; and on that day, the great chamberlain served the water, as well before as after the banquet—namely, Hugh de Vere, earl of Oxford; and he received, as his right, the basins and the towels wherewith he served. Gilbert, earl marshal, earl of Strigul, served the office of the marshalsea; and it was his duty to appease tumults in the king's house, to give liveries to them, and to guard the entrances to the king's hall; and he received from every baron who was knighted by the king, and from every earl on that day, a palfrey with a saddle. The head cook of the royal kitchen always at the coronation received the steward's robe as his right; and of the aforesaid offices none claimed to themselves the right in the queen's house, except G. de Stamford, who said that he, in right of his predecessors, ought to be chamberlain to the queen, and door-keeper of her chamber on that day, which he there obtained; and had, as his right, all the queen's furniture, as belonged to the office of chamberlain....And the cloth which hung behind the king at table was claimed, on the one side by the doorkeepers, and on the other by the scullions, for themselves."

Such were the ceremonies which graced the marriage of Henry and Eleanor of Provence.

No sooner had the union been celebrated, than the indignant father of Joanna of Ponthieu, feeling keenly the insult offered to his child, applied to the Roman pontiff for his interference, well knowing that it was the only authority before which Henry bowed.

Fortunately for the newly married pair, the pope thought fit to take a very different view of his crowned vassal's falsehood. Gregory rejoiced to see him allied to a family which had given such unequivocal marks of attachment to the holy see. He therefore addressed a bull to the archbishop of Canterbury, and another to the prior of Beverley, expressing his approbation of the union, "seeing," as the document ran, "that the proposed marriage of the king and Joanna being within the fourth degree of consanguinity, the king could not, without injury to his fame and peril to his soul, be permitted to contract it."

The king found a party far more difficult to manage than the holy see in his barons; for having summoned a parliament to assemble at the Tower, they unanimously refused to attend, alleging as a reason that, surrounded as the king was with foreign and inimical counsellors, they could not with safety trust themselves in so strong and well-garrisoned a fortress.

This excuse marks not only the great unpopularity of Henry, but the utter contempt into which his character for good faith had fallen. It was in vain that he alternately threatened and remonstrated; the barons continued firm, and prudence prevailing over his self-will, he was obliged to yield the point, and returning to his palace at Westminster, hold the parliament there.

Never did the church of Rome proceed with so little prudence, show such an utter disregard of everything like justice, as during the reign of the obsequious Henry. The pontiff, not content with the enormous sums of money which under various pretences he had drained from the kingdom, had the modesty to demand that three hundred Italians should be preferred to English benefices. In vain did the primate, Edmund Rich, archbishop of Canterbury, protest against the iniquitous measure; his patriotism called forth the resentment both of the king and the pope. Wearied with the contest, he retired at last, a voluntary exile, to Pontemac, where he died.

Never was a system calculated to alienate the affections of a people from the church more perseveringly pursued than by the court of Rome; it was that of the leech draining the lifeblood of the nation on which it had fastened. Men began to question an infallibility which manifested itself only in acts of injustice and oppression. In the universal condemnation of the grasping policy of the pontiff, the seeds were sown which slowly but steadily ripened in the hearts of all who possessed the least sense of dignity and national independence.

Little, however, did Henry heed the growing disaffection of his subjects, exulting in the protection of the holy see, which found in him a vassal worthy of her pretensions. He fasted both during Lent and on every Saturday throughout the year, and feasted right royally both at Easter and Christmas; keeping the festival of St. Edward most religiously, passing the whole night in the church, clothed in white.

But these observances could neither fill his exhausted exchequer nor conciliate the good will of the nation. The people murmured, the nobles were loud in their complaints; but Henry pertinaciously adhered to his foreign counsellors, and invited over many of the queen's relations, on whom he conferred both estates and benefices. In 1243, we find in the Fœdera a charter respecting Eleanor's dower, from which it appears that the appropriated dower of the queens of England was not even at this period assigned her. In this she is assigned the town and castle of Gloucester, the cities of Worcester and Bath, the manors of Clyne and Chiltham; and instead of the manors assigned by the first charter, the whole county of Chester, together with Newcastle-under-Lyme, is granted.

This year, Eleanor's mother visited England, for the purpose of bringing Senchia, her third daughter, who was affianced to the king's brother, Richard earl of Cornwall.

The marriage was celebrated with much splendour; the king directing that the whole way from London bridge to Westminster should be hung with tapestry and other ornaments. This seems to prove that comparatively little vacant space could have extended between London and Westminster.

On this occasion, Henry confirmed to his brother the county of Cornwall, together with the honours of Wallingford and Eye. He also made splendid presents to the bride and her mother; and bestowed on Peter of Savoy, the queen's maternal uncle, the honour of the Eagle, and the title and estates of the earl of Richmond; and on his brother, the archbishopric of Canterbury.

But while Henry thus lavished gifts on his queen's relations, he duly, according to orthodox practice, mulcted the unfortunate Jews. During the same year writs were

forwarded to the sheriffs of each county, directing them to return before Henry at Worcester, upon Quinquagesima Sunday, the names of six of the richest Jews from each large town, and two from every small one, "to treat with him for their *mutual benefit*."

What a mockery and scorn for the once chosen people of the earth!

This assembly, which has been called the Jews' parliament, soon discovered that the monarch's care for his own benefit absorbed all consideration for theirs. He informed them that they must raise him no less a sum than twenty thousand marks, not less than two hundred thousand pounds, at the present value of money.

When the Jews expressed their astonishment at the enormous amount demanded, all liberty of remonstrance or discussion was denied them; they were told to return to their homes again, and have one half of the sum required ready by Midsummer, and the remaining half by Michaelmas.

The account of this iniquitous act of oppression is taken from Dr. Tovey's "Judaica Anglia," and is but one of many instances of the cruel rapacity exercised on this unfortunate race.

As, during the same year, Raymond, the queen's father, received a gratification of four thousand marks, there is little doubt but a portion of the spoil obtained so dishonestly enabled the king to gratify the avarice of his father-in-law.

In his oppression of the Jews Henry resembled his father. On two occasions during his reign the absurd charge of crucifying a Christian child was brought against them, and so strongly were the superstitious feelings of the nation excited that many of the richest Israelites fled, when, as a matter of course, the king seized all their property. In Lincoln eighty of the wealthiest Jews were hanged, and sixty-three sent prisoners to the Tower, to undergo a similar fate.

Several appear to have been marked out for particular spoliation. Aaron of York, whom Scott doubtless had in view when he wrote "Ivanhoe," declared to Matthew Paris that no less than thirty thousand marks had been extorted from him in seven years, besides a gift of two hundred to the queen.

Towards London the hostility of Henry was strongly marked, and on various "right royal" pretexts he grievously mulcted the citizens; while his cruel execution of Constantine Fitz-Arnulph, whose only crime seems to have been opposition to the overbearing conduct of the abbot of Westminster, encouraged an equal hostility in the hearts of the citizens; and from henceforward they determinedly took their places in the ranks of the king's enemies.

The whole account may be seen in Stow; and when we read that this unfortunate citizen offered 15,000 marks for his life, we have strong proof of Henry's hatred to London, which could urge so mercenary and so needy a monarch to reject such a ransom.

Ere long, the citizens obtained a marked triumph. The king, reduced almost to beggary by the swarms of foreign adventurers, who grew rich upon his bounty, was compelled to pledge the crown jewels. In vain did he offer them to wealthy noble, or rich Italian merchant; none could buy; it was the citizens of London who paid down the stipulated sum; and Henry saw the crown jewels pass into the hands of these the most detested of his subjects.

Matthew Paris has left us a singular account of a ceremony which took place in 1247, when Henry received from the patriarch of Jerusalem a relic which he accepted with unquestioned faith. The gift consisted of a portion of the blood of Christ. On its arrival, the king commanded all the clergy of London and Westminister to attend with crosses, banners, and tapers at St. Paul's, where he himself repaired, and taking from the treasury the crystal vase which contained the supposed treasure, "with all honour, reverence, and fear, bore it upon its stand, walking on foot, in mean attire—that is to say, in a cloak made of coarse cloth, without a hood—to the church of Westminster.

"The pious monarch," continues the chronicler, "did not cease to carry it in both hands, through all the rugged and miry way, keeping his eyes constantly fixed upon it, or elevating it devoutly towards heaven." The scene was worthy of the actor and the superstitious credulity of the age in which it occurred.

Henry, however, had a canopy held over him, supported by four lances; and an attendant on either hand, guiding him by the arms, lest he should stumble. When he arrived at Westminster, he was met by the whole convent at the church door; but not even then did the king relinquish his precious burden: he went round the church, the chapels, and the adjoining court, and at length presented the vase and its contents "to God and the church of St. Peter." Mass was then sung; and the bishop of Norwich, ascending the pulpit, delivered a sermon to the people, extolling the value of the relic, lauding the great devotion of the king, and anathematising all those who hinted doubts of its reality—a forcible proof that, even at this early day, our forefathers did not believe all that was told them. This memorable day was closed by the king's feasting sumptuously, and conferring knighthood on his half-brother, William de Valence; and the well-pleased monk of St. Albans, who was present, records the gratifying circumstance that Henry, seeing him, called him, and prayed him "expressly and fully to record all these things in a well-written book." Nor did this instance of royal condescension fail of its intended effect: the whole account is written in a strain of courtesy which contrasts curiously enough with the plain speaking of the rest of the volume; and these two pages stand out from the rest of the text like a laureate's birthday ode.

CHAPTER LV.

Continuation of the Reign of Henry III.—Further Exactions of the Church of Rome—Affairs of Sicily—Rebellion of Simon de Montfort.

HENRY'S bounty and profuse liberality to his foreign relations, his friends and favourites, might have appeared less intolerable to his subjects had anything been done for the honour of the nation. But the crown was so utterly subservient to the see of Rome, that it fell into contempt and well-deserved hatred. The regal vassal appeared to have no will but the pontiff's, who was not slow to abuse his weakness.

It is true that the king, in 1242, declared war against Louis IX. of France, and undertook an expedition into Guienne at the earnest solicitation of the count de la Marche, who promised to support him with all his force.

He was unsuccessful in his attempts against that great monarch, was worsted at Taillebourg, was deserted by his allies, lost what remained to him of Poitou, and was obliged to return, with loss of honour, into England. The Gascon nobility were attached to the English government, because the distance of their sovereign allowed them to remain in a state of almost total independence: and they claimed, some time after, Henry's protection against an invasion which the king of Castile made upon that territory. Henry returned into Guienne, and was more successful in this expedition, but he thereby involved himself and his nobility in an enormous debt, which both increased their discontents and exposed him to greater danger from their enterprises.

Want of economy, and an ill-judged liberality, were Henry's great defects; and his debts, even before this expedition, had become so troublesome, that he sold all his plate and jewels, in order to discharge them. When this expedient was first proposed to him, he asked where he should find purchasers? It was replied, the citizens of London. "On my word," said he, "if the treasury of Augustus were brought to sale, the citizens are able to be the purchasers: these clowns, who assume to themselves the name of barons, abound in everything, while we are reduced to necessaries." And he was thenceforth observed to be more forward and greedy in his exactions upon the citizens.

But the grievances which the English during this reign had reason to complain of in the civil government, seemed to have been still less burthensome than those which they suffered from usurpations and exactions of the court of Rome. On the death of Langton in 1238, the monks of Christ-church elected Walter de Hemesham, one of their own body, for his successor. But as Henry refused to confirm the election, the pope, at his desire, annulled it, and immediately appointed Richard, chancellor of Lincoln, for archbishop, without waiting for a new election. On the death of Richard in 1231, the monks elected Ralph de Neville, bishop of Chichester; and though Henry was much pleased with the election, the pope, who thought that prelate too much attached to the crown, assumed the power of annulling his election. He rejected two clergymen more, whom the monks had successively chosen; and he at last told them that if they would elect Edmund, treasurer of the church of Salisbury, he would confirm their choice; and his nomination was complied with. The pope had the prudence to appoint both times very worthy primates; but men could not forbear observing his intention of thus drawing gradually to himself the right of bestowing that important dignity.

The avarice, however, more than the ambition of the see of Rome, seems to have been in this age the ground of general complaint. The papal ministers, finding a vast stock of power amassed by their predecessors, were desirous of turning it to immediate profit, which they enjoyed at home, rather than of enlarging their authority in distant countries, where they never intended to reside. Everything was become venal in the Romish tribunals; simony was openly practised; no favours, and even no justice could be obtained without a bribe; the highest bidder was sure to have the preference, without regard either to the merits of the person or of the cause; and besides the usual perversions of right in the decision of controversies, the pope openly assumed an absolute and uncontrolled authority of setting aside, by the plenitude of his apostolic power, all particular rules, and all privileges of patrons, churches, and convents. On pretence of remedying these abuses, pope Honorius, in 1226, complaining of the poverty of his see as the source of all grievances, demanded from every cathedral two of the best prebends, and from every convent two monks' portions, to be set apart as a perpetual and settled revenue of the papal crown. But all men being sensible that the revenue would continue for ever, the abuses immediately return, his demand was unanimously rejected. About three years after, the pope demanded and obtained the tenth of all ecclesiastical revenues, which he levied in a very oppressive manner, requiring payment before the clergy had drawn their rents or tithes, and sending about usurers, who advanced them the money at exorbitant interest. In the year 1240, Otho, the legate, having in vain attempted the clergy in a body, obtained separately, by intrigues and menaces, large sums from the convents and prelates; and on his departure is said to have carried more money out of the kingdom than he left in it.

This experiment was renewed four years afterwards by Martin, the legate, who brought from Rome full powers of suspending and excommunicating all priests who refused compliance with his demands, and the king, who relied on him for support to his tottering authority, never failed to support these exactions.

Meanwhile, all the chief benefices of the kingdom were conferred on Italians; great numbers of that nation were sent over at one time to be provided for; non-residence and pluralities were carried to an enormous height; Mansel, the king's chaplain, is computed to have held at once seven hundred ecclesiastical livings; and the abuses became so evident as to be palpable to the blindness of superstition itself. The people, entering into associations, rose against the Italian clergy, pillaged their barns, wasted their lands, insulted the persons of such of them as they found in the kingdom; and when the justices made inquiry into the authors of this disorder, the guilt was found to involve so many, and those of such high rank, that it passed unpunished. At last, when Innocent IV., in 1245, called a general council at Lyons, in order to excommunicate the emperor Frederic, the king and nobility sent over agents to complain before the council of the rapacity of the Romish church. They represented, among many other grievances, that the benefices of the Italian clergy in England had been estimated, and were found to amount to 60,000 marks a year, a sum which exceeded the annual revenue of the crown itself. They obtained only an evasive answer from the pope; but as mention had been made before the council of the feudal subjection of England to the see of Rome, the English agents, at whose head was Roger Bigod, earl of Norfolk, exclaimed against the pretension, and insisted that king John had no right, without the consent of his barons, to subject the kingdom to so ignominious a servitude. The popes, indeed, afraid of carrying matters too far against England, seem thenceforth to have little insisted on that pretension.

This check, received at the council of Lyons, was not able to stop the court of Rome in its rapacity. Innocent exacted the revenues of all vacant benefices; the twentieth of all ecclesiastical revenues without exception; the third of such as exceeded a hundred marks a year, and the half

of such as were possessed by non-residents. He claimed the goods of all intestate clergymen; he pretended a title to inherit all money gotten by usury; he levied benevolences upon the people; and when the king, contrary to his usual practice, prohibited these exactions, he threatened to pronounce against him the same censures which he had emitted against the emperor Frederic.

But the most oppressive expedient employed by the pope was, the embarking of Henry in a project for the conquest of Naples, or Sicily on this side the Faro, as it was called; an enterprise which threw much dishonour on the king, and involved him during some years in great trouble and expense. The Romish church, taking advantage of favourable incidents, had reduced the kingdom of Sicily to the same state of feudal vassalage which she pretended to extend over England, and which, by reason of the distance, as well as high spirit of this latter kingdom, she was not able to maintain. After the death of the emperor Frederic II., the succession of Sicily devolved on Conrad I., grandson of that monarch, whose natural son Mainfroy, under pretence of governing the kingdom during the minority of the young prince, had formed the ambitious scheme of obtaining the crown himself.

Pope Innocent, who had carried on violent war against the emperor, and desired nothing more ardently than to deprive him of his Italian dominions, still continued hostilities against his successor. He pretended to dispose of the crown of Italy, not only as its temporal lord, but by right of his office of Christ's vicar, and he tendered it to the earl of Cornwall, whose immense wealth he flattered himself would enable him to carry on the war successfully against Mainfroy.

Henry, tempted by so magnificent an offer, accepted the insidious proposal, without consulting either his brother or the parliament, and gave the pontiff unlimited credit to expend whatever money he thought necessary for the subjugation of that kingdom; the consequence was that he found himself speedily involved in an immense debt, amounting to 135,541 marks.

In this dilemma, unwilling to retreat, the king summoned a parliament to grant him supplies, but omitted sending writs to the refractory barons; yet even those who attended were so sensible of the audacious cheat, that they refused to take his demands into consideration. In this extremity the clergy were his only resource.

The pope, to aid him, published a crusade against Mainfroy. He leased a tenth of all the ecclesiastical benefices in England; granted Henry the goods of all churchmen who died intestate, and the revenues of vacant benefices. But these taxations, iniquitous as they undoubtedly were, were deemed less objectionable than another imposition, suggested by the bishop of Hereford, and which might have opened the door to endless abuses.

This prelate, who resided at the court of Rome by deputation from the English church, drew bills of different values, but amounting on the whole to 150,540 marks, on all the bishops and abbots of the kingdom; and granted these bills to Italian merchants, who it was pretended had advanced money for the service of the war against Mainfroy. As there was no likelihood of the English prelates submitting without compulsion to such an extraordinary demand, Rustand, the legate, was charged with the commission of employing authority for that purpose; and he summoned an assembly of the bishops and abbots, whom he acquainted with the pleasure of the pope and of the king. Great were the surprise and indignation of the assembly: the bishop of Worcester exclaimed, that he would lose his life rather than comply; the bishop of London said, that the pope and king were more powerful than he, but if his mitre were taken off his head, he would clap on a helmet in its place. The legate was no less violent on the other hand; and he told the assembly in plain terms, that all ecclesiastical benefices were the property of the pope, and he might dispose of them, either in whole or in part, as he saw proper. In the end the bishops and abbots, being threatened with excommunication, which made all their revenues fall into the king's hands, were obliged to submit to the exaction; and the only mitigation which the legate allowed them was, that the tenths already granted should be accepted as a partial payment of the bills. But the money was still insufficient for the pope's purpose; the conquest of Sicily was as remote as ever: the demands which came from Rome were endless: pope Alexander became so urgent a creditor, that he sent over a legate to England, threatening the kingdom with an interdict, and the king with excommunication, if the arrears which he pretended to be due to him were not instantly remitted: and at last Henry, sensible of the cheat, began to think of breaking off the agreement, and of resigning into the pope's hands that crown which it was not intended by Alexander that he or his family should ever enjoy.

The earl of Cornwall had now reason to value himself on his foresight in refusing the fraudulent bargain with Rome, and in preferring the solid honours of an opulent and powerful prince of the blood of England, to the empty and precarious glory of a foreign dignity. But he had not always firmness sufficient to adhere to this resolution: his vanity and ambition prevailed at last over his prudence and his avarice; and he was engaged in an enterprise no less extensive and vexatious than that of his brother, and not attended with much greater probability of success. The immense opulence of Richard having made the German princes cast their eye on him as a candidate for the empire, he was tempted to expend vast sums of money on his election; and he succeeded so far as to be chosen king of the Romans, which seemed to render his succession infallible to the imperial throne. He went over to Germany, and carried out of the kingdom no less a sum than seven hundred thousand marks, if we may credit the account given by some ancient authors, which is probably much exaggerated. His money, while it lasted, procured him friends and partisans; but it was soon drained from him by the avidity of the German princes; and having no personal or family connections in that country, and no solid foundation of power, he found at last that he had lavished away the frugality of a whole life, in order to procure a splendid title; and that his absence from England, joined to the weakness of his brother's government, gave occasion to the barons once more to revolt, and involved his native country and family in great calamities.

The successful revolt of the nobles in the reign of king John, and their imposing on him and his successors a limit to the royal power, had made them feel their weight and importance in the state. This triumph, followed as it was by a long minority, had weakened as well as impoverished the crown.

In Henry's situation, either great abilities and vigour were necessary to overawe the nobility, or great prudence of conduct to avoid giving them just grounds of complaint. Unfortunately he possessed neither of these qualities, having neither prudence to choose right measures, nor that constancy of purpose which sometimes insures success to wrong. He was entirely devoted to his unworthy favourites, who were always foreigners; and upon these he lavished without discretion his diminished resources.

Henry, finding that the barons indulged in the most unbridled tyranny towards their own vassals, without observing the laws they had imposed upon the crown, unhesitatingly followed the evil example set before him. In his administration the great charter was continually violated; a course of conduct which not only lessened his authority in the kingdom, but multiplied the sources of discontent against him, exposed him to affronts and even dangers, and provoked resistance to his remaining prerogatives.

Matthew Paris relates that, in 1244, when he desired a supply from parliament, the barons, complaining of the frequent violations of the charter, demanded that in return for the money he should resign the right of nominating the chancellor and great justiciary of the kingdom to them; and if we may credit the same historian, they had formed further plans which, if successfully carried out, would have reduced the crown to a state of pupilage and dependence. The king, however, would consent to nothing but a renewal of the great charter, and a general permission to excommunicate all who might hereafter violate it. All he could obtain in return for his concession was a scutage of twenty shillings on each knight's fee for the marriage of his eldest daughter with the king of Scotland, an impost which was expressly provided for by their feudal tenures.

Four years afterwards, in full parliament, he was openly reproached for his broken word on having again violated his promises, and asked if he did not blush to desire aid from his people whom he openly professed to despise and hate, and to whom he on all occasions preferred strangers and aliens—from a people who groaned under the exactions which he either exercised over them or permitted others to inflict. He was told that in addition to insulting his nobility, by forcing them to contract unequal marriages with foreigners, no class of his subjects was too obscure to escape the tyranny of himself and his ministers; that even the food he consumed in his household, the clothes which himself and his servants wore, and the wine they drank, were all taken by violence from their lawful owners, and no kind of compensation ever offered; that foreign merchants, to the shame of the kingdom, shunned the English harbours as if they were infested by pirates; and that all commerce was being gradually destroyed by these acts of unprincipled violence.

Unhappily, this was no exaggerated picture: in his reckless proceedings Henry even added insult to injury, by

The Battle of Taillebourg.

INTERIOR OF WESTMINSTER HALL. THE BISHOPS DENOUNCING SENTENCE OF EXCOMMUNICATION AGAINST ALL WHO SHOULD OPPOSE THE CHARTER

forcing the traders whom he despoiled of their goods to carry them at their own expense to whatever place he chose to appoint. Even the poor fishermen could not escape his rapacity and that of his foreign favourites, till finding they could not dispose of the fruit of their labours at home, they carried them to foreign ports.

The king, says Matthew Paris, gave the parliament only good words and fair promises in answer to these remonstrances, accompanied with the most humble submissions, which they had too often found deceitful to be gulled by; the consequence was, that they unanimously refused the supply he asked, to the great disappointment of his rapacious favourites.

In 1253, he again found himself obliged to apply to parliament, which he did under pretence of having made a vow to undertake a crusade.

The parliament hesitated to comply, and the ecclesiastical order sent a deputation to Henry, consisting of four prelates, the primate, and the bishops of Winchester, Salisbury, and Carlisle, to remonstrate with him on his frequent violation of their privileges, the oppressions with which he had loaded them as well as the rest of his subjects, and the uncanonical and forced elections made to the vacant dignities in the church. "It is true," replied the king, "I have been somewhat faulty in this particular: I obtruded you, my lord of Canterbury, on your see; I was obliged to employ both entreaties and menaces, my lord of Winchester, to have you elected; my proceedings, I confess, were very irregular, my lords of Salisbury and Carlisle, when I raised you from the lowest stations to your present dignities. I am determined henceforth to correct these abuses; and it will also become you, in order to make a thorough reformation, to resign your present benefices, and try to enter again in a more regular and canonical manner." The bishops surprised at these unexpected sarcasms, replied that the question was not at present how to correct past errors, but to avoid them for the future. The king promised redress both of ecclesiastical and civil grievances; and the parliament in return agreed to grant him a supply, a tenth of the ecclesiastical benefices, and a scutage of three marks on each knight's fee; but as they had experienced his frequent breach of promise, they required that he should ratify the great charter in a manner still more authentic and more solemn than any which he had hitherto employed. All the prelates and abbots were assembled; they held burning tapers in their hands; the great charter was read before them; they denounced the sentence of excommunication against every one who should thenceforth violate the fundamental law; they threw their tapers on the ground, and exclaimed, "May the soul of every one who incurs this sentence so stink and corrupt in hell!" The king bore a part in this ceremony, and subjoined, "So help me God, I will keep all these articles inviolate, as I am a man, as I am a Christian, as I am a knight, and as I am a king crowned and anointed." Yet was the tremendous ceremony no sooner finished, than his favourites, abusing his weakness, made him return to the same arbitrary and irregular administration, and the expectations and hopes of the nation were again eluded and disappointed.

The universal discontent which ensued afforded a pretext to Simon de Montfort, earl of Leicester, to attempt, by means of a revolution, to wrest the sceptre from the feeble and irresolute hands which held it. This powerful noble was the younger son of that Simon de Montfort who displayed so much skill and courage in the crusade against the unfortunate Albigenses, but who tarnished his fame by the most execrable cruelty; for the history of religious persecution does not present a darker page than the one in which the sufferings of the Albigenses is recorded.

It was a short-sighted policy which induced the church of Rome to draw the sword against these seceders from her pale. The blood of the martyrs for conscience' sake never sinks into the soil like barren seed; it is sure to germinate and bring forth fruit in time, and he who sheds it is doomed to the contempt and execration of mankind.

A large inheritance in Britain had fallen to the victorious crusader, whose eldest son, unable to perform fealty to the kings of France and England, had transferred it to his younger brother Simon, who came over and did homage for his lands, and the title of earl of Leicester.

In 1238 he married Eleanor, the king's sister, the widow of William, earl of Pembroke; but the union of the princess with a subject and a foreigner, though contracted with Henry's consent, was loudly complained of, not only by the earl of Cornwall, but most of the English barons; the bridegroom, however, was protected against their violence by his brother-in-law, who little imagined the ungrateful return he would meet with.

No sooner had Leicester succeeded in establishing himself in his new possessions and dignities, than he acquired, by insinuation and address, great popularity and influence with the nation, gaining the affections of all orders of men; a circumstance which lost him the friendship of the feeble monarch, who first banished him from court, then weakly recalled him, and finally, to rid himself of his presence, entrusted him with the government of Guienne, where, to do the earl justice, he did good service, and acquired great honour.

Instead of being rewarded, as he had every reason to expect, he was once more exiled. Henry called him a traitor to his face; on which the haughty noble gave him the lie; and told him that, if he were not his sovereign, he would soon make him repent the insult.

This second quarrel was, however, accommodated, either through the good nature or fear of Henry, and the offender admitted once more to some share of favour and authority. With all his defects, Leicester appears to have been of too noble and independent a nature to observe a compliance with his brother-in-law's capricious humours, or to act in subserviency to his minions. Perhaps he found it more to his advantage to cultivate the good opinion of the people, and to inflame the general discontent against the wretched administration of the kingdom. He filled every place with his complaints against the violations of the great charter, the acts of violence committed on the people, the iniquitous combination between the pope and the king in their mutual acts of tyranny and extortion, and the neglect shown to his native subjects and barons by Henry.

In this last complaint, although a foreigner himself, he was more zealous than any other noble in the realm, in representing the indignity of submitting to be governed by strangers. By hypocritical and politic pretensions to devotion, he succeeded in obtaining the favour of the clergy, whilst, at the same time, he secured the affections of the people. He carefully cultivated the friendship of the

barons by pretending an animosity against the favourites, which animosity served as the basis of union between himself and that powerful order.

A violent quarrel which broke out between Leicester and William de Valence, Henry's half brother and chief favourite, brought matters to extremity, and determined the former to give full scope to his long-cherished schemes of ambition, which the laws and the royal authority had hitherto with no little difficulty restrained.

He secretly called an assembly of the most powerful nobles, particularly Humphrey of Hereford, high constable; Roger of Norfolk, earl marshal; and the earls of Warwick and Gloucester; men who, by their exalted rank and immense possessions, stood first in the rank of English nobility.

To this assembly he exposed the necessity of reforming the state, and entrusting the execution of the laws to other hands than those which had proved themselves, by bitter experience, so totally unfitted for the charge confided to them. In his harangue he did not forget to inveigh against the oppressions exercised against the lower orders, or exaggerate on the violations of the privileges of the barons, and the depredations committed on the clergy; and, in order to aggravate the enormity of his brother-in-law's conduct, he appealed to the great charter, which Henry had so often sworn to maintain and so frequently violated.

This violation, he urged, with great show of justice, of privileges which their ancestors had wrung from the crown by an enormous sacrifice of blood and treasure, ought not to be endured, unless they were prepared to set the seal upon their own degeneracy by permitting such important advantages to be torn from them by a weak prince and his insolent foreign favourites. To all suggestions of a remonstrance the speaker replied by observing that the king's word had been too frequently broken, although confirmed by oaths, ever again to be relied upon, and that nothing short of his being placed in a position of utter inability to violate the national privileges could henceforth ensure the regular observance of them.

These complaints, which were founded in truth, accorded so entirely with the sentiments of the assembly, that they produced the desired effect, and the barons pledged themselves to a resolution of reducing the public grievances, by taking into their own hands the administration of the kingdom.

Henry having summoned a parliament, in expectation of receiving supplies for his Sicilian project, the barons appeared in the hall, clad in complete armour, and with their swords by their side. The king on his entry, struck with the unusual appearance, asked them what was their purpose, and whether they intended to make him their prisoner. Roger Bigod replied in the name of the rest, that he was not their prisoner, but their sovereign; that they even intended to grant him large supplies, in order to fix his son on the throne of Sicily; that they only expected some return for this expense and service; and that, as he had frequently made submissions to the parliament, had acknowledged his past errors, and still allowed himself to be carried into the same path, which gave them such just reason of complaint, he must now yield to more strict regulations, and confer authority on those who were able and willing to redress the national grievances. Henry, partly allured by the hopes of supply, partly intimidated by the union and martial appearance of the barons, agreed to their demand; and promised to summon another parliament at Oxford, in order to digest the new plan of government, and to elect the persons who were to be entrusted with the chief authority.

This parliament, which the royalists, and even the nation, from experience of the confusions that attended its measures, afterwards denominated the *mad parliament*, met on the day appointed; and as all the barons brought along with them their military vassals, and appeared with an armed force, the king, who had taken no precautions against them, was in reality a prisoner in their hands, and was obliged to submit to all the terms which they were pleased to impose upon him. Twelve barons were selected from among the king's ministers, twelve more were chosen by parliament: to these twenty-four, unlimited authority was granted to reform the state; and the king himself took an oath that he would maintain whatever ordinances they should think proper to enact for that purpose. Leicester was at the head of this supreme council, to which the legislative power was thus in reality transferred; and all their measures were taken by his secret influence and direction. The first step bore a specious appearance, and seemed well calculated for the end which they professed to be the object of all these innovations: they ordered that four knights should be chosen by each county; that they should make inquiry into the grievances of which their neighbourhood had reason to complain, and should attend the ensuing parliament, in order to give information to that assembly of the state of their particular counties: a nearer approach to our present constitution than had been made by the barons in the reign of king John, when the knights were only appointed to meet in their several counties, and there to draw up a detail of their grievances. Meanwhile the twenty-four barons proceeded to enact some regulations, as a redress of such grievances as were supposed to be sufficiently notorious: they ordered that three sessions of parliament should be regularly held every year, in the months of February, June, and October; that a new sheriff should be annually elected by the votes of the freeholders in each county; that the sheriffs should have no power of fining the barons who did not attend their courts, or the circuits of the justiciaries; that no heirs should be committed to the wardship of foreigners, and no castles intrusted to their custody; and that no new warrens or forests should be created, nor the revenues of any counties or hundreds be let to farm. Such were the regulations which the twenty-four barons established at Oxford, for the redress of public grievances.

But the earl of Leicester and his associates, having advanced so far to satisfy the nation, instead of continuing in this popular course, or granting the king that supply which they had promised him, immediately provided for the extension and continuance of their own authority. They roused anew the popular clamour which had long prevailed against foreigners; and they fell with the utmost violence on the king's half-brothers, who were supposed to be the authors of all national grievances, and whom Henry had no longer any power to protect. The four brothers, sensible of their danger, took to flight, with an intention of making their escape out of the kingdom; they were eagerly pursued by the barons; Aymer, one of the brothers, who had been elected to the see of Winchester, took shelter in his episcopal palace, and carried the others along with him

they were surrounded in that place, and threatened to be dragged out by force, and to be punished for their crimes and misdemeanours; and the king, pleading the sacredness of an ecclesiastical sanctuary, was glad to extricate them from this danger by banishing them the kingdom.

In this act of violence, as well as in the former usurpations of the barons, the queen and her uncles are supposed to have secretly concurred, being jealous of the credit acquired by the brothers, which had entirely eclipsed their own.

The subsequent proceedings of the confederate barons were inefficient to open the eyes of the nation to their real design, which was neither more nor less than reducing both the king and the people under the arbitrary power of a very limited aristocracy, which, had it been carried out, must have terminated at last in anarchy or tyranny.

They artfully pretended that they had not yet digested all the regulations necessary for the reformation of the state, and the redress of grievances; that they must still retain their power till the great purpose was effected; or, in other words, that they intended to remain perpetual governors, till it pleased them to abdicate their authority; and, in order to cement their power, they formed an association amongst themselves, and swore that they would stand by each other with their lives and fortunes.

The justiciary, the chancellor, and treasurer of the kingdom, were removed from their offices, and creatures of the barons thrust into their places; even the offices of the king's household were disposed of at their pleasure, and the government of all castles put into hands in which they could confide; and the whole power of the state being thus transferred into their hands, they put the crowning act to their usurpations by imposing an oath, which all subjects were obliged to swear under penalty of being proclaimed public enemies, that they would obey and execute all regulations, both known and unknown, of the twenty-four barons.

Never had men a more glorious opportunity of covering themselves with honour, and securing the gratitude of their country, than the confederates now possessed; but, instead of devoting themselves to establishing the liberties of their country, reforming the abuses, and correcting the laws, they selfishly preferred their personal aggrandisement.

The history of the twenty-four barons is the history of the English aristocracy as a party for centuries. We seldom or ever find them in opposition to the crown, wringing from it the surrender of its prerogatives, unless to arrogate those very prerogatives to themselves. In their short-sighted policy, little did they foresee that a power was gradually springing into existence which would one day call them to as severe an account as they had called their monarchs—the power of the people.

Edward, the king's eldest son, then a youth of eighteen, who, even at that early age, gave indications of the noble, manly spirit which distinguished him in after life, was, after some opposition, forced to take the oath, which virtually deposed his father and his family from sovereign authority. The last person in the kingdom who held out was earl de Warenne, but even he was eventually compelled to submit.

Not content with this usurpation of the royal power, the barons introduced an innovation in the constitution which was utterly at variance with its letter and spirit. They ordained that parliament should choose a committee of twelve persons, who should, in the intervals between the sessions, possess all the authority of the whole parliament, and attend, on a summons to that effect, the person of the king wherever he might reside. So powerful were the confederates, that even this regulation was submitted to, and thus the entire government was overthrown, or fixed upon a new foundation; the monarchy subsisted without its being possible for the king to strike a single stroke in defence of the constitution against the newly-elected oligarchy.

The lesson to Henry must have been a bitter one, for he was the last person in the kingdom who had a right to complain. He could invoke no law which he had not been the first to violate. The degradation and restraint he endured was the just punishment of his perfidy and countless perjuries.

The report that the king of the Romans intended visiting England alarmed the confederated nobles, who dreaded lest his extensive influence should be employed to restore his family, and overturn their new system of government. Under this impression they sent the bishop of Worcester to meet him at St. Omers, to demand, in their name, the reason of his journey; how long he intended to remain in the kingdom; and to insist that, before he set foot in it, he should swear to observe the regulations established at Oxford.

On Richard's refusal to take this oath, they prepared to resist him as a public enemy; they fitted out a fleet, assembled an army, and exciting the inveterate prejudices of the people against foreigners, from whom they had suffered so many oppressions, spread the report that Richard, attended by a number of strangers, meant to restore by force the authority of his exiled brothers, and to violate all the securities provided for public liberty. The king of the Romans was at last obliged to submit to the terms required of him.

But the barons, in proportion to their continuance in power, began gradually to lose that popularity which had assisted them in obtaining it; and men repined, that regulations, which were occasionally established for the reformation of the state, were likely to become perpetual, and to subvert entirely the ancient constitution. They were apprehensive lest the power of the nobles, always oppressive, should now exert itself without control, by removing the counterpoise of the crown; and their fears were increased by some new edicts of the barons, which were plainly calculated to procure to themselves an impunity in all their violences. They appointed that the circuits of the itinerant justices, the sole check on their arbitrary conduct, should be held only once in seven years; and men easily saw that a remedy, which returned after such long intervals, against an oppressive power, which was perpetual, would prove totally insignificant and useless. The cry became loud in the nation, that the barons should finish their intended regulations. The knights of the shires, who seem now to have been pretty regularly assembled, and sometimes in a separate house, made remonstrances against the slowness of their proceedings. They represented that, though the king had performed all the conditions required of him, the barons had hitherto done nothing for the public good, and had only been careful to promote their own private advantage, and to make

inroads on royal authority; and they even appealed to prince Edward, and claimed his interposition for the interests of the nation and the reformation of the government. The prince replied, that though it was from constraint, and contrary to his private sentiments, he had sworn to maintain the provisions of Oxford, he was determined to observe his oath: but he sent a message to the barons, requiring them to bring their undertaking to a speedy conclusion, and fulfil their engagements to the public: otherwise, he menaced them, that at the expense of his life he would oblige them to do their duty, and would shed the last drop of his blood in promoting the interests, and satisfying the just wishes of the nation.

The remonstrances of the knights of the shire, and the spirited conduct of the heir to the crown, obliged the barons at last to publish a new code of ordinances for the reformation of the state; but the expectations of the nation were bitterly disappointed when they found that they consisted only in some trivial alterations in the municipal laws, and that their rulers intended to prolong their authority still further, under pretence that the task they had assumed was not yet accomplished.

The current of popular opinion now turned in favour of the crown; indeed, so much so, that the barons had little left to rely on for support beyond personal influence and the power of their families, which, although exceedingly great, could not match itself against the combination of the king and people.

Even this basis of authority was daily weakened by their intestine jealousies and quarrels, which broke forth when they came to share the spoils they had so dishonestly obtained, and the rivalry between the earls of Leicester and Gloucester, the chief leaders of the confederacy, began to threaten its existence. The latter noble, more moderate in his pretensions, was desirous of putting an end to the career of the barons' usurpations; whilst the former, enraged at the opposition he met with in his own party, pretended to abandon all interest in English affairs, and retired to France.

France was at this time governed by Louis IX., a monarch of the most singular character that is to be met with in all the records of history. He united to the abject superstition of the monk all the courage and great qualities of a hero, and what may appear still more extraordinary, the justice and integrity of a patriot, the mildness and humanity of a philosopher.

So far from taking advantage of the divisions amongst the English in attempting to expel them from the provinces which they still held in France, he entertained many doubts as to the justice of the sentence of attainder pronounced against Henry's father, the licentious and worthless John, and had even expressed some intention of restoring his forfeited possessions. Louis was only prevented from carrying out his imprudent resolution by the remonstrances of his own barons, who, according to Matthew Paris, pointed out the extreme danger of such a measure; and, what had more weight with their scrupulous monarch, the justice of punishing by a legal sentence the barbarity and felony of John.

Whenever this prince interposed in English affairs, it was always with an intention of composing the differences between the king and his nobility: he recommended to both parties every peaceable and reconciling measure, and he used all his authority with the earl of Leicester, his native subject, to bend him to compliance with [illegible]. He made a treaty with England (May 20), at a time when the distractions of that kingdom were at the greatest height, and when the king's authority was totally annihilated, and the terms which he granted might, even in a more prosperous state of their affairs, be deemed reasonable and advantageous to the English. He yielded up some territories which had been conquered from Poitou and Guienne; he ensured the peaceable possession of the latter province to Henry; he agreed to pay that prince a large sum of money; and he only required that the king should, in return, make a final cession of Normandy and the other provinces, which he could never entertain any hopes of recovering by force of arms. This cession was ratified by Henry, by his two sons and two daughters, and by the king of the Romans and his three sons. Leicester alone, either moved by a vain arrogance, or desirous to ingratiate himself with the English populace, protested against the deed, and insisted on the right, however distant, which might accrue to his consort. Louis saw, in this obstinacy, the unbounded ambition of the man; and, as the barons insisted that the money due by treaty should be at their disposal, not at Henry's, he also saw, and probably with regret, the low condition to which this monarch, who had more erred from weakness than from any bad intentions, was reduced by the turbulence of his own subjects.

But the situation of Henry soon after wore a more favourable aspect. The twenty-four barons had now enjoyed the sovereign power nearly three years, and had visibly employed it, not for the reformation of the state, which was their first pretence, but for the aggrandisement of themselves and their favourites.

The breach of trust was apparent to all the world; every order of men in the kingdom felt it, and secretly murmured against it. The dissension amongst the barons themselves, whilst it added to the evil, made the remedy more obvious and easy; the desertion of the earl of Gloucester to the crown seemed to promise Henry certain success in the event of his attempting to resume his authority, but he dared not take that step without first applying to Rome for absolution from the oaths and engagements he had contracted.

The king could not have made his application at a more fortunate period, for the pope felt much dissatisfied with the conduct of the barons, who, in order to conciliate the nation, had expelled all the Italian ecclesiastics from the kingdom and confiscated their benefices, being determined to maintain the rights and privileges of the English church, in which the right of patronage belonging to their own families was included.

The extreme enmity of the English clergy against their Italian rivals was also a fruitful source of contention and ill-feeling. The former were consequently in bad odour at Rome. About the same time that the barons had annihilated the prerogative of the monarchy at Oxford, the clergy had met in synod at Merton, and passed several ordinances which were equally calculated to increase their own grandeur at the expense of the crown. They decreed that it was unlawful to try ecclesiastics by secular judges, and that the clergy were not to regard any prohibitions from civil courts; that lay patrons had no right to confer spiritual benefices; and that the magistrates were obliged, without further inquiry, to imprison all excommunicated persons; and that ancient usage was sufficient authority

for any clerical possessions or privileges, without any particular grant or charter.

A century before and these articles would have met the approbation of the court of Rome; but times were changed; the pope was become somewhat jealous of the great independence of the English clergy, which made them stand less in need of his protection, emboldened them to resist his authority, and complain of the preference given to the Italian priests.

He proved himself willing, therefore, on Henry's application, to annul the new constitution of the English church, and at the same time to absolve him and all his subjects from the oath they had taken to observe the provisions of Oxford.

Prince Edward, whose liberal mind, though in such early youth, had taught him the great prejudice which his father had incurred by his levity, inconstancy, and frequent breach of promise, refused for a long time to take advantage of this absolution; and declared that the provisions of Oxford, how unreasonable soever in themselves, and how much soever abused by the barons, ought still to be adhered to by those who had sworn to observe them. He himself had been constrained by violence to take that oath; yet was he determined to keep it. By this scrupulous fidelity, the prince acquired the confidence of all parties, and was afterwards enabled to recover fully the royal authority, and to perform such great actions, both during his own reign and that of his father.

The situation of England, during this period, as well as that of most European kingdoms, was somewhat peculiar. There was no regular military force maintained in the nation: the sword, however, was not, properly speaking, in the hands of the people: the barons were alone entrusted with the defence of the community; and after any effort which they made, either against their own prince or against foreigners, as the military retainers departed home, the armies were disbanded, and could not speedily be reassembled at pleasure. It was easy, therefore, for a few barons, by a combination, to get the start of the other party, to collect suddenly their troops, and to appear unexpectedly in the field with an army which their antagonists, though equal, or even superior, in power and interest, would not dare to encounter. Hence the sudden revolutions which often took place in those governments; hence the frequent victories obtained by one faction over the other; and hence it happened that the seeming prevalence of a party was seldom a prognostic of its long continuance in power.

As soon as the king received the pope's absolution from his oath, accompanied with menaces of excommunication against all opponents, trusting to the countenance of the church, to the support promised him by many considerable barons, and to the returning favour of the people, he immediately took off the mask. After justifying his conduct by a proclamation, in which he set forth the private ambition and the breach of trust conspicuous in Leicester and his associates, he declared that he had resumed the government, and was determined thenceforth to exert the royal authority for the protection of his subjects. He removed Hugh le Despenser and Nicholas of Ely, the justiciary and chancellor appointed by the barons, and put Philip Basset and Walter de Merton in their place. He substituted new sheriffs in all the counties, men of character and honour; he placed new governors in most of the castles, he changed all the officers of his household; he summoned a parliament, in which the resumption of his authority was ratified, with only five dissenting voices; and the barons, after making one fruitless effort to take the king by surprise at Winchester, were obliged to acquiesce in those new regulations.

The king, in order to cut off every objection to his conduct, offered to refer all the differences between him and the earl of Leicester to Margaret, queen of France. The celebrated integrity of Louis gave a mighty influence to any decision which issued from his court; and Henry probably hoped that the gallantry on which all barons, as true knights, valued themselves, would make them ashamed not to submit to the award of that princess. Louis merited the confidence reposed in him. By an admirable conduct, probably as political as just, he continually interposed his good offices to allay the civil discords of the English: he forwarded all healing measures, which might give security to both parties; and he still endeavoured, though in vain, to soothe by persuasion the fierce ambition of the earl of Leicester, and to convince him how much it was his duty to submit peaceably to the authority of his sovereign.

That bold and artful conspirator was no wise discouraged by the bad success of his former enterprises: the death of Richard, earl of Gloucester, who was his chief rival in power, seemed to open a fresh field to his ambition, and expose the throne to renewed violence. It was in vain that Henry declared his intention of strictly observing the great charter, and even of maintaining the regulations made at Oxford, with the exception of those which annihilated the royal authority; the barons could not peaceably resign the uncontrolled power they had so long enjoyed. Many of them entered into Leicester's views, and, among the rest, Gilbert, the young earl of Gloucester, who brought with him a great accession of power from the great wealth and authority he had inherited.

Even Henry, son of the king of the Romans, commonly called Henry d'Almaine, though a prince of the blood, joined the party of the barons against the interests of his family. Leicester, who still resided in France, secretly formed the links of this vast conspiracy, and planned the whole scheme of operations.

The princes of Wales, notwithstanding the great power of the monarchs both of the Saxon and Norman lines, had still preserved authority in their own country. Though they had frequently been forced to pay tribute to the crown of England, they were with difficulty retained in a state of vassalage, or even in peace; and almost through every reign since the Conquest had infested the English frontiers with such petty excursions and inroads as seldom secured a place in general history.

The English, still content with repelling their invasions and chasing them back to their mountains, had never been able, under their most active princes, to subjugate the country, or reduce them to feudal subjection; an advantage reserved to Henry, the weakest and most indolent of kings.

In 1237, Lewellyn, prince of Wales, declining in years and stricken with infirmities, but still more harassed by the unnatural rebellion of his youngest son, Griffin, had recourse to the protection of Henry, subjecting his princi-

pality, which had so long maintained its independence, to vassalage under the crown of England.

His eldest son and heir, David, renewed the homage to his imprisonment, and the prince of Wales, freed from the apprehension of so dangerous a rival, paid henceforth less regard to the English monarch, and soon renewed those

London Bridge in the 13th Century. Escape of Queen Eleanor. (See page 290.)

England, and having taken his brother prisoner, delivered him into the hands of Henry, who kept him a prisoner in the Tower. Griffin lost his life in attempting to escape from incursions by which the Welsh, during so many ages, had infested the English borders.

Lewellyn, the son of Griffin, who succeeded to his uncle,

although he had performed homage to England, was well pleased to inflame those civil discords on which he rested for security. For this purpose he entered into an alliance with Leicester, and collecting all the forces of his principality, invaded England with an army of thirty thousand men.

He ravaged the lands of Roger de Mortimer, and of all the barons who adhered to the crown; he marched into Cheshire, and committed like depredations on prince Edward's territories; every place where his disorderly troops appeared was laid waste with fire and sword; and though Mortimer, a gallant and expert soldier, made stout resistance, it was found necessary that the prince himself should head the army against this invader. Edward repulsed prince Lewellyn, and obliged him to take shelter in the mountains of North Wales; but he was prevented from making further progress against the enemy by the disorders which soon after broke out in England.

The Welsh invasion was the appointed signal for the malcontent barons to rise in arms; and Leicester, coming over secretly from France, collected all the forces of his party, and commenced an open rebellion. He seized the person of the bishop of Hereford—a prelate obnoxious to all the inferior clergy, on account of his devoted attachment to the court of Rome. Simon, bishop of Norwich, and John Mansel, because they had published the pope's bull, absolving the king and kingdom from their oaths to observe the provisions of Oxford, were made prisoners, and exposed to the rage of the party. The king's demesnes were ravaged with unbounded fury; and as it was Leicester's interest to allure to his side, by the hopes of plunder, all the disorderly ruffians in England, he gave them a general license to pillage the barons of the opposite party, and even all neutral persons. But one of the principal resources of his faction was the populace of the cities, particularly of London; and as he had, by his pretensions to sanctity, and his zeal against Rome, engaged the monks and lower ecclesiastics in his party, his dominion over the inferior ranks of men became uncontrollable. Thomas Fitz-Richard, mayor of London, a furious and licentious man, gave the countenance of authority to these disorders in the capital; and having declared war against the substantial citizens, he loosened all the bands of government by which that turbulent city was commonly but ill restrained. On the approach of Easter, the zeal of superstition, the appetite for plunder, or what is often as prevalent with the populace as either of these motives, the pleasure of committing havoc and destruction, prompted them to attack the unhappy Jews, who were first pillaged without resistance, then massacred to the number of five hundred persons. The Lombard bankers were next exposed to the rage of the people; and though, by taking sanctuary in the churches, they escaped with their lives, all their money and goods became a prey to the licentious multitude. Even the houses of the rich citizens, though English, were attacked by night; and way was made by sword and fire to the pillage of their goods, and often to the destruction of their persons.

The queen, who, though defended by the Tower, was terrified by the neighbourhood of such dangerous commotions, resolved to go by water to the castle of Windsor; but as she approached the bridge, the populace assembled against her; the cry ran, *Drown the witch;* and besides abusing her with the most opprobrious language, and pelting her with rotten eggs and dirt, they had prepared large stones to sink her barge, when she should attempt to shoot the bridge. At this moment the mayor interposed for her protection, and conveyed her in safety to St. Paul's.

CHAPTER LVI.

Continuation of the Reign of Henry III.—Interposition of the King of France—The Battle of Lewes—Popularity of Leicester—Escape of Prince Edward—The Battle of Evesham—Defeat and Death of Leicester—Restoration of Tranquillity—Departure of Edward to the Holy Land—Death of Henry III.

The violence and fury of Leicester's faction had risen to such a height in all parts of England, that the king, unable to resist their power, was obliged to set on foot a treaty of peace, and to make an accommodation with the barons on the most disadvantageous terms. He agreed to confirm anew the provisions of Oxford, even those which entirely annihilated the royal authority; and the barons were again re-instated in the sovereignty of the kingdom. They restored Hugh le Despenser to the office of chief justiciary; they appointed their own creatures sheriffs in every county of England; they took possession of all the royal castles and fortresses; they even named all the officers of the king's household; and they summoned a parliament to meet at Westminster, in order to settle more fully their plan of government. They here produced a new list of twenty-four barons, to whom they proposed that the administration should be entirely committed; and they insisted that the authority of this junto should continue, not only during the reign of the king, but also during that of prince Edward.

This prince, the life and soul of the royal party, had unhappily, before the king's accommodation with the barons, been taken prisoner by Leicester in a parley at Windsor; and that misfortune, more than any other incident, had determined Henry to submit to the ignominious conditions imposed upon him. But Edward having recovered his liberty by the treaty, employed his activity in defending the prerogatives of his family; and he gained a great party even among those who had first adhered to the cause of the barons. His cousin Henry d'Almaine, Roger Bigod, earl marshal, earl Warenne, Humphry Bohun, earl of Hereford, John Basset, Ralph Basset, Hammond l'Estrange, Roger Mortimer, Henry de Piercy, Robert Bruce, Roger de Leybourne, with almost all the lords marchers, as they were called, on the borders of Wales and Scotland, the most warlike parts of the kingdom, declared in favour of the royal cause; and hostilities, which had scarcely been suppressed, were again renewed in every part of England. But the near balance of the parties, joined to the universal clamour of the people, obliged the king and barons to open anew the negotiations for peace; and it was agreed by both sides to submit their differences to the arbitration of the king of France.

This virtuous prince, the only man who, in like circumstances, could safely have been intrusted with such an authority by a neighbouring nation, had never ceased to interpose his good offices between the English factions; and had even, during the short interval of peace, invited over to Paris both the king and the earl of Leicester, in order to accommodate the differences between them; but found that the fears and animosities on both sides, as well as the ambition of Leicester, were so violent as to render all his endeavours ineffectual. But when this solemn appeal,

ratified by the oaths and subscriptions of the leaders in both factions, was made to his judgment, he was not discouraged from pursuing his honourable purpose: he summoned the states of France at Amiens; and there in the presence of that assembly, as well as in that of the king of England and Peter de Montfort, Leicester's son, he brought this great cause to a trial and examination. It appeared to him that the provisions of Oxford, even had they not been extorted by force, had they not been so exorbitant in their nature, and subversive of the ancient constitution, were expressly established as a temporary expedient, and could not, without breach of trust, be rendered perpetual by the barons. He therefore annulled these provisions; restored to the king the possession of his castles, and the power of nomination to the great offices; allowed him to retain what foreigners he pleased in the kingdom, and even to confer on them places of great trust and dignity; and, in a word, re-established the royal power on the same footing on which it stood before the meeting of the parliament at Oxford.

But while he suppressed dangerous innovations, and preserved unimpaired the prerogatives of the English crown, he was not negligent of the rights of the people. Besides ordering a general amnesty for all past offences, he declared that his award was not in any way intended to derogate from the liberties enjoyed by the nation in virtue of any concessions or charters from the crown.

The award of Louis may have been abstractedly just, and was certainly in accordance with the principles of the English constitution; but it involved measures which, under present circumstances, it was by no means expedient should be carried into effect. The barons might, indeed, have pressed too heavily upon the royal prerogative, and seized on every side, with little scruple, the securities they considered necessary; but it was certain that if those securities were suddenly and completely relinquished, the national charters would become as wholly inoperative as they were before the parliament of Oxford. The word of the king had ceased to have any weight whatever; and the barons determined to resist the award of Louis, and once more to take up arms. Again the country was desolated by civil war, which was renewed with more than its former fury.

Henry III. at the Battle of Lewes.

The northern counties and those of the west remained attached to the cause of the king; while the adherents of the barons lay in the midland and south-eastern counties, the Cinque Ports, and in the neighbourhood of London. The citizens of the capital, especially, were conspicuous for the firmness with which they supported the barons, and the powerful assistance which they rendered to the insurgent cause. At the opening of the campaign various successes attended the movements of the royal troops. Elated by his good fortune, Henry marched to the south with the view of gaining the adhesion of the Cinque Ports. Mean-

while Leicester had remained in London; and thence, while watching the successful career of the king, had employed himself, with the calmness of a skilful general, in concentrating a body of forces. Having accomplished this object, he marched from the capital, determined to meet the king in the south, and compel him to a decisive battle. The army of Henry was greatly superior in numbers to the force marching against him, and therefore he resolved to await his enemies in the spot where he was already encamped,—in a hollow or valley at Lewes, in Sussex. Leicester marched his troops to the downs about two miles from Lewes, where he encamped for the night.

The interval of repose was not suffered to pass unimproved. Leicester employed it in arousing in his favour all the superstitious feelings of his soldiery. In time of war or peace he had always been noted for his strict observance of religious forms, and he compared his own life and the cause in which he was engaged with the perjuries and treacheries of Henry, which he said had withdrawn from that king all favour of Heaven. He commanded that his army should wear a white cross, in token that they were engaged in a sacred war; and the bishop of Chichester, one of his associates, gave a solemn absolution to the troops, promising honour to those who lived, and to those who fell the welcome of martyrs in heaven.

The evening hours were thus spent in exciting to the utmost the enthusiasm of the troops. On the morning of the 14th of May (A.D. 1264), the earl prepared for the attack, and leaving a reserve behind him, he descended upon the royal forces. On the king's side were the barons whose names have been already mentioned, together with John Baliol and John Comyn from beyond the Scottish border. On the side of Leicester were the earls Gloucester, Warenne, and Derby, Robert de Roos, John Fitz-John, Godfrey de Lucy, John de Vescy, Nicholas Seagrave, Richard Grey, William Marmion, and many other powerful nobles.

As the two armies joined battle, the attack was commenced by prince Edward, who on this day displayed evidence of that military talent and gallantry which was afterwards to become so conspicuous. The prince led a body of troops upon a force of Londoners, who had armed themselves in the cause they supported. Unskilled in the art of war, and probably much inferior in their appointments, the citizens gave way before the heavy cavalry of Edward, which cut them to pieces. The prince remembered the insults they had offered to his mother, and in his eagerness for vengeance he pursued the flying Londoners, perfectly regardless of what might happen to the rest of the royal army. Leicester meanwhile took advantage of this impetuosity, and collecting his forces into a compact and dense mass, he led them against the main body of the king's troops, and completely defeated them. Henry himself was taken prisoner, with his brother the king of the Romans, Robert Bruce, and John Comyn.

When the prince returned from the pursuit on which he was engaged, he perceived the fatal error he had committed. The ground was covered with the bodies of his friends, and he learnt from a few breathless fugitives that his father with many of his chief nobles were in the hands of Leicester, and were shut up in the priory of Lewes. Scarcely had he received this news, when he was attacked by a troop of cavalry, and was compelled to surrender. The earl Warenne, and with him the king's half-brothers, escaped from the field, and reached the Continent. It is stated that in this battle 5,000 Englishmen were slain by the hands of their countrymen.

On the following morning a treaty, called the "Mise of Lewes," was entered into between the defeated king and his barons. It was arranged that prince Edward, with Henry, the son of the king of the Romans, should remain in the hands of Leicester as hostages for their fathers, and that another attempt should be made finally to arrange matters by arbitration. The earl, however, who now found himself possessed of almost unlimited power, refused to release the king and his brother, and kept them as well as their sons in imprisonment. In this course of action he was supported by the people and by a large majority of the ecclesiastics; and when the pope issued sentence of excommunication against Leicester and his party, many of the clergy defied the papal authority, and still held up to the admiration of their hearers the man who had been placed under the ban of Rome. They described him as the reformer of abuses, the protector of the oppressed, the avenger of the church, and the father of the poor.

The popularity which Leicester at this time enjoyed was unexampled; and here we see again the not unfrequent spectacle of a man, strong in the affections of the people, becoming much more a king than he who wears the crown. The earl exercised his authority upon all those barons who still adhered to the royal cause, and compelled them to quit their strongholds, to give up their possessions and submit to a trial by their peers. In the judgments passed upon these men we see the rapid advance which had lately taken place in civilisation. There were no sentences to death, or abominable torture, or chains; and in most cases the punishment inflicted consisted of a short exile to Ireland. The king's name was still employed in all acts of government, and his captivity was rendered as light as was consistent with the safe custody of his person. Every indulgence, together with all outward demonstrations of respect, was accorded to him, and a similar mildness was evinced towards the other royal prisoners.

Immediately before the battle of Lewes, the queen had escaped to the Continent, where she received offers of assistance from different foreign princes. To them the proceedings of the barons appeared only as a rebellion against the king; and they were interested in repressing such attempts against royal authority. With their assistance the queen collected a large force of mercenaries, which was assembled at the port of Damme, in Flanders, in readiness to pass over into England. Leicester was not long in taking measures against this new danger. Secure in the good opinion of the people, he sent heralds throughout the country, summoning the men-at-arms from towns and castles, cities and boroughs, to meet him on Barham Downs. The call was generally responded to; and the earl having formed an encampment of his army on the downs, he took the command of a fleet which he had collected from the neighbouring ports. For some time he cruised about the channel, waiting for the fleet from Damme to set sail; and intending to intercept it, and prevent it from reaching the English shores. But the queen's supporters, who entertained a salutary fear of a sea-fight with the English, did not venture to leave their shelter;

and eventually her troops were disbanded, and the enterprise was relinquished.

But the downfall of the earl was at hand. Gifted, as he undoubtedly was, with a most powerful intellect, he was not superior to the demoralising influences of his high position. Possessed already to its full extent of the substance of power, he further aimed at the enjoyment of its forms. He asserted in too marked a manner his superiority over the barons associated with him, a proceeding to which those haughty chiefs were little disposed to submit. Prince Edward, who had been placed with his father, and with him enjoyed considerable liberty of person, carefully observed this growing dissatisfaction, and fomented it by every means at his command. It is worthy of remark here that the parliament assembled by Leicester to consider the case of prince Edward, and by the decision of which he was placed with his father, was assembled early in 1265, and appears to have been the first parliament at which representatives of the cities and boroughs were present.

The dissensions among the barons increased rapidly. The earl of Gloucester declared himself the rival of De Montfort, and with the assistance of his brother, Thomas de Clare, who was an attendant of the prince, arranged a plan by which Edward might escape from confinement. The scheme succeeded; a swift horse was conveyed to the prince, on which he evaded pursuit, and reached Ludlow, where the earl of Gloucester had fixed his headquarters. The earl was not remarkable for prudence or good sense, but the temper of the nobles had shown itself in too marked a manner to be mistaken, and he perceived that they would require pledges for the fulfilment of the charters before they would render any support to the royal cause. He, therefore, caused the prince to take such pledges, and to undertake that he would govern according to law, and would expel the foreigners from the realm.

The earl of Derby had already entered into communication with the prince, and within a short time afterwards the earl Warenne sailed from the Continent, and landed in South Wales with 120 knights, and a troop of foot soldiers. Prince Edward also made arrangements with other nobles who were favourable to him, and effected a simultaneous rising in different parts of the country. Simon de Montfort, eldest son of the earl of Leicester, was stationed in Sussex with a small force, while the earl himself, retaining possession of the king's person, remained at Hereford. Leicester was extremely anxious that his son should join him, and so concentrate their forces,—a measure which Edward used every exertion to prevent. The prince took possession of the fords of the Severn, and destroyed the boats and bridges on that river. Some skirmishing took place between the rival armies, and the skill of the two leaders was displayed in various warlike manœuvres. At length Leicester succeeded in crossing the river, and proceeded to Worcester, where he awaited the arrival of his son. But Simon de Montfort showed little of his father's ability, and the active prince Edward attacked him by night near Kenilworth, and captured all his horses and treasure. Many of his best men fell into the hands of the prince, and their leader was compelled to make his escape as best he could to the neighbouring castle, which was then in the possession of the De Montfort family.

The earl, unacquainted with this disaster, advanced his army to Evesham on the Avon. On arriving there he perceived his own standards on the hills, advancing from the direction of Kenilworth. His eyes were gladdened by the sight, and he advanced unsuspiciously to meet the destruction which was gathering around him. The standards were those of his son in the hands of his enemies; and when at length this was discovered it was too late to retreat. Meanwhile prince Edward had directed a combined movement of troops in his flank and rear, so that the earl found himself completely surrounded. As he perceived the high degree of military skill evinced in these arrangements, he is said to have complained that his enemies had learnt from him the art of war. He then exclaimed, "May the Lord have mercy on our souls, for our bodies are prince Edward's."

If such was the old general's opinion, it is not probable that he expressed it openly, and it is certain that he took measures for defence as energetically as though he were assured of victory. Having spent a short time in prayer, and taken the sacrament, as his custom was before going into battle, he marshalled his men in compact order, and placed himself at their head. In the first instance he endeavoured to force his way through the royal troops with the intention of reaching Kenilworth. The attempt was frustrated, and he then formed his troops in a solid mass on the summit of a hill, which was speedily surrounded by his enemies. The king, who still remained with the earl, had been encased in armour and placed on horseback. During the confusion of the fight the old man was thrown from his horse, and only escaped being slain by calling out, "Hold your hand, I am Harry of Winchester." The prince, who heard the voice, ran to his father's assistance, placed him on horseback, and carried him to a place of safety. Again and again the royalist troops advanced against the little band on the hill, and again and again were repulsed with heavy loss. Leicester's horse was killed under him, a serious accident in days when the motions of the knight were encumbered by the weight of a mass of armour, but the earl rose to his feet and continued the struggle in that position. But the numbers of his foes were overpowering; as a few men with toil and difficulty were driven back, a hundred others stepped forward to supply their place, and it became evident that the contest was hopeless. Leicester then sent messengers to the royalists to demand whether they gave quarter; and the answer returned was that there was no quarter for traitors. His son Henry fell by his side, and each moment some one of the best and bravest of his friends was also struck down. At length the earl himself, after surviving most of the champions of his cause, and standing, as it were, alone, met the fate of his companions, and fell, sword in hand.

The acts of slaughter by which this victory was followed appear in very unfavourable contrast to the humanity which had been displayed by Leicester and his associates on a similar occasion. The usages of chivalry were altogether lost sight of; and such was the hatred of the royalists towards their opponents, inflamed still further by the gallant resistance they had met with, that no mercy was shown to them. No prisoners were taken, no quarter was given to rich or poor, no offer of ransom stayed the uplifted arm of the smiter; and barons and knights, yeomen and citizens, were mingled in an indiscriminate slaughter.

Leicester was beyond the vengeance of his foes, but

nevertheless they gratified their brutal rage upon his inanimate corpse, which they cut up and disfigured in a horrible manner, and in this state presented it to a lady, the wife of one of the earl's most deadly enemies, to whom they appear to have considered that it would prove an acceptable gift. According to their custom, the people of England declared the dead hero to be a martyr, and from the reported holiness of his past life, they considered it certain that miracles would be wrought by him after his death, and such was generally believed to be the case, although for fear of the king they did not dare openly to express the belief which they held in secret. Whatever degree of justice there may have been in the popular view of his character, his name was reverenced among the people for many years, under the name of Sir Simon the Righteous.

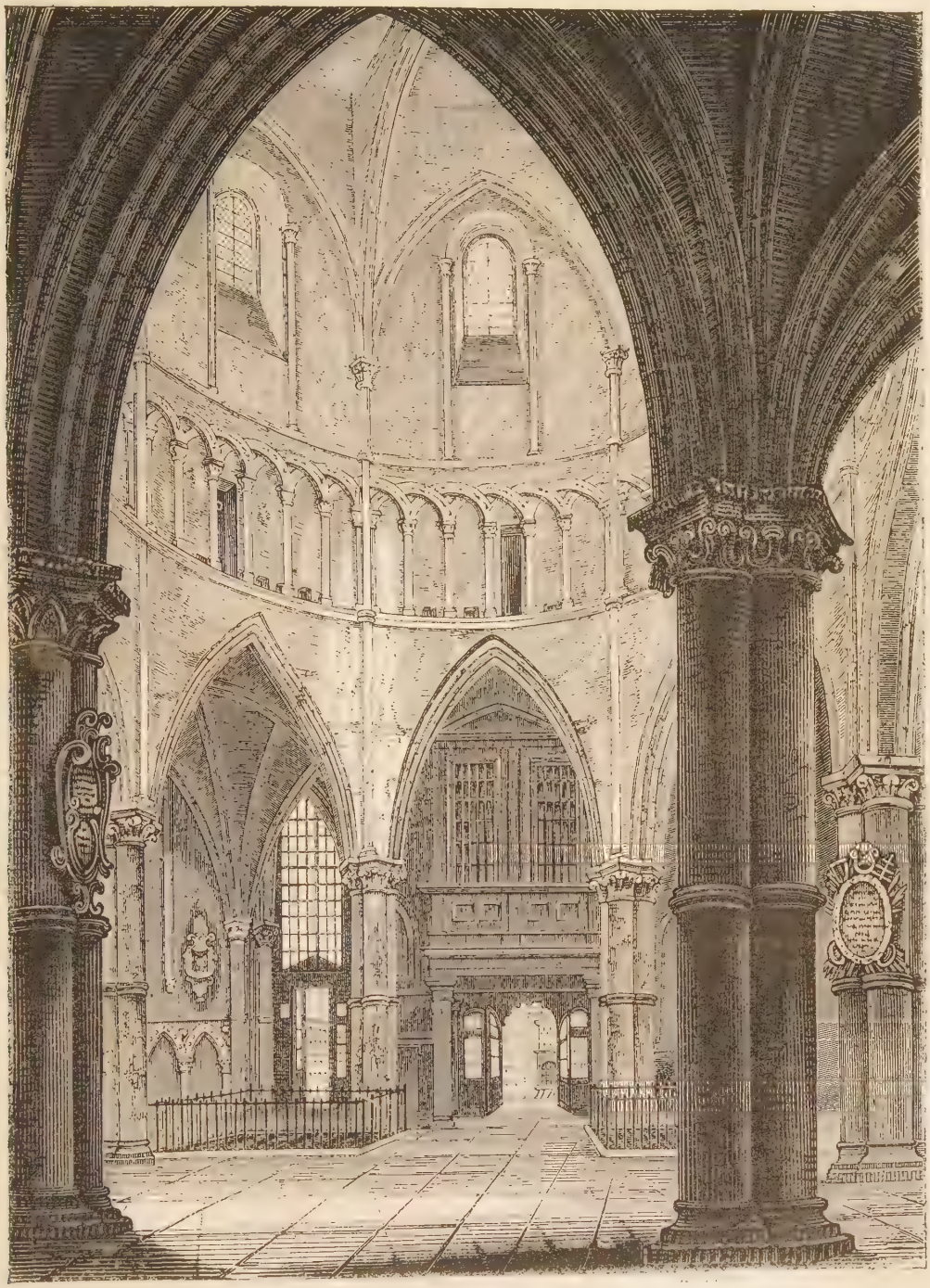
The victory of Evesham restored the king at once to his authority. He proceeded to Warwick, where his brother, the king of the Romans, had advanced to meet him, accompanied by many of the noble prisoners of Lewes, who now for the first time regained their liberty. Within a month afterwards a parliament assembled at Winchester. The king was little more than a cipher among the company of his barons. He knew that by their arms his success had been won, and that he owed their support not to any desire for an absolute monarchy, but to a resistance to a power which seemed likely to exceed that of royalty itself. Henry, therefore, made no attempt to revoke the great charter; and widely different as his real sentiments and desires may have been, he assented to those measures of constitutional government which were laid before him. But the parliament of Winchester was not proof against personal animosities, and it passed heavy sentences against

Combat between Prince Edward and the Baron Adam Gourdon.

the family and some of the adherents of Leicester, at the same time depriving the citizens of London of their charter.

These were not the times in which such measures would

desperate men, maintained a position for many months in the isles of Axholme and Ely, while his retainers still held the castle of Kenilworth against repeated attacks. The Cinque Ports preserved an obstinate defence, and in



Circular Part of the Temple Church, London.

be quietly submitted to. In every part of the kingdom some baron raised the standard of insurrection and maintained a desultory warfare upon the troops and property of the king. Simon de Montfort, with a small band of

the forests of Hampshire the famous Adam Gourdon defied the royal authority. This baron was one of the most gallant soldiers of his time, and from the recesses of the forest he conducted rapid movements against the royal

troops, inflicting upon them heavy losses. Prince Edward took the field against the rebels, and during two years he had full opportunity of gratifying his taste for war. He passed hither and thither throughout the country, striking a blow now in this direction, now in that, and with varying success.

All the efforts of the prince proved unavailing to bring the insurgents to submission, and it became necessary to relax the stringent measures of punishment which had been adopted, and to make a display of clemency on the part of the government, as an inducement to the rebels to lay down their arms. For this purpose a committee was appointed, consisting of twelve bishops and barons, and their award, known as the "Dictum de Kenilworth," was formally adopted by the king and parliament. This award appears to have been generally received with satisfaction; but at this juncture the earl of Gloucester quarrelled with the king, and assumed a warlike attitude, asserting that the Dictum of Kenilworth was not sufficiently lenient, nor such as the barons had a right to expect. The citizens of London, indignant at the loss of their charter, witnessed the dissension between the king and Gloucester with great satisfaction, and when the earl took up arms they opened their gates to receive him. But Gloucester was ill-prepared to maintain the contest on which he had entered, and at the approach of the royal army he demanded leave to negotiate. The permission was granted, and Gloucester obtained a pardon for himself on condition of entire submission to the king, while the Londoners purchased their safety for a fine of 25,000 marks.

Henry was naturally of a humane disposition, and he was further dissuaded from harsh measures by the letters of the pope, who at this time exerted his influence in the cause of humanity and mercy. The determined attitude of the people also showed very clearly the policy of such a course of action. It is not an easy thing to conquer Englishmen, even by Englishmen, and the king had good reason to dread the prolonged hostility of his stubborn subjects. It would appear, however, that one chivalrous act on the part of prince Edward contributed in no small degree to extinguish the spirit of disaffection. In a battle fought in a wood near Alton, the prince encountered the redoubtable Adam Gourdon in single combat. The prince struck him from his horse, and when the vanquished knight lay at his mercy, instead of despatching him Edward gave him his life, and, on the same night, presented him honourably to the queen, and obtained for him a full pardon. The story ends like a romance, for we are informed that the prince "took Sir Adam de Gourdon into his especial favour, and was ever afterwards faithfully served by him."

On the 18th of November, A.D. 1267, a parliament was held at Marlborough, in which the king adopted some of the most important enactments of the earl of Leicester, and added to them other laws equally calculated to promote the welfare of the people. The resistance of the insurgents, which was by no means unreasoning, was almost immediately removed by these measures; one after another the barons threw down their arms, the last to do so being the fugitives of the Isle of Ely. These at length joined in accepting the Dictum de Kenilworth, which they had seen scrupulously fulfilled in the case of others.

The country being now restored to a state of tranquillity, prince Edward took the cross, and determined to proceed to the Holy Land. The papal legate had actively urged him to take this step, and he had the example of Louis IX., afterwards called Saint Louis, who had lately departed on a second crusade. Before quitting the country, Edward took measures which displayed a high degree of wisdom and foresight, having for their object to preserve the peace of the realm during his absence. Among these was a new charter, securing to the citizens of London the restoration of their liberties, and a free pardon to all those nobles who still remained proscribed by the king. In the month of July, A.D. 1270, the prince departed with his wife Eleanor, his cousin Henry, the son of the king of the Romans, and nearly two hundred English nobles and knights of high degree. The best and bravest of the chivalry of England had assembled round their gallant prince, with all the pomp and pageantry with which the nobles of that age marched forth to war; few, indeed, among them were likely ever to return, but such considerations affected them little, while the church followed them with its blessing, and the minstrels accompanied them to sing the story of their prowess, and to raise their name from the dust. With the belief that he should attain honour here, and happiness in heaven, the soldier of the cross might hurl a double defiance at death, and bear an undaunted brow over the deserts of Syria, or the mountains of Judæa.

The young Henry D'Almaine, the son of the king of the Romans, was one of the first to perish in this disastrous expedition. The manner of his death was unusually tragical. He had been despatched back to England by Edward upon some secret mission, and took his way through Italy, passing through the city of Viterbo, where a new pope was then being elected. One morning at an early hour, when he was engaged in saying prayers in one of the churches, he was suddenly aroused by a well-known voice at his side, which exclaimed in menacing tones,—"Thou traitor—thou shalt not escape us." Turning round hastily he perceived his two cousins, Simon and Guy de Montfort, who, with their mother the countess of Leicester, had been driven out of England. The countess was king Henry's sister, and her sons referred this harsh measure to the influence of the king of the Romans, who had ever been considered as their bitterest enemy. The two De Montforts were in complete armour, and drawing their swords they advanced upon their cousin. Henry, who was utterly without means of defence, clung to the altar before which he had knelt, and two priests who were in the church threw themselves before him. But his foes were implacable; they neither respected the sanctuary, nor the persons of the ministers of God. The two priests were slain before the altar, and Henry, after being pierced with many wounds, was dragged without the church, where his body was mutilated by the murderers, in revenge for the indignities which had been inflicted upon the corpse of their father. They then effected their escape to the castle of the Count Aldobrandini, one of whose daughters had been married to Guy de Montfort, and by whom it is related that they were protected from the consequences of their infamous deed.

The king of the Romans had lately married a young German bride, and he was then occupying himself with feastings and displays, still believing that he should live to call himself emperor of Germany. But the death

of his son was a fatal blow to such vain ambition, and the shock affected him so severely that he died in December, A.D. 1271. In the winter following the king was attacked by an illness which also proved mortal. His last moments were characterised by great demonstrations of piety, and Henry III. followed his brother to the grave on the 16th of November, A.D. 1272. The abbey church of St. Peter's at Westminster had been rebuilt by him, and he desired that his bones should be laid there, in the grave formerly occupied by Edward the Confessor. The remains of that saintly king had been removed by Henry, and placed in a golden shrine.

As the body of the king was about to be lowered into the grave, the barons who were present placed their hands in turn upon it, and took an oath of allegiance to Edward, then absent in the Holy Land. Henry III. died at the age of sixty-eight years, during fifty-six of which he had worn the crown. A few words only are needed to sum up the character of this prince as it is presented to us in contemporary records. He was certainly not without good qualities, which would probably have been more conspicuous in a humbler sphere of life. He was, as had been said of one of his predecessors, rather a monk than a king; he was humane, generous, true to his friends, but he was guided in the choice of those friends rather by his own inclinations than by any regard for the public good, or to the characters of the persons whom he so distinguished. He was remarkable for weaknesses rather than for vices, but in the case of one placed in the seat of authority, it may be considered that such weaknesses are not less than vicious, and may be productive of more serious injury to the governed than positive vices. Few men who have occupied the English throne have rendered themselves so thoroughly contemptible in the eyes of all men as did Henry III. During the whole of his long reign, from the regency of the earl of Pembroke to the assumption of power by the earl of Leicester, Henry was a king only in name, and in those instances where he exercised the royal authority, he did so for purposes of exaction and extortion of money from his oppressed subjects.

CHAPTER LVII.

Architecture of the Thirteenth Century.

THE history of Architecture is the history of change, sometimes gradual, sometimes sudden, but always change. People and nations change; new ideas spring up among them; new wants are created, and Architecture has to minister to those wants. A necessity arises, and has to be met; this suggests a new idea, which carried out leads to still further changes. The direction being once given, new forms of beauty are elicited, which are eagerly followed out, until at length scarcely a trace remains of the form from which they sprung. This was pre-eminently the case with Gothic Architecture. The necessity arose from the vaulting of spaces of unequal sides; the Norman semicircular arch could not meet this difficulty. And it could only be met by using a semicircular arch for the longer side, and a pointed one for the shorter. The pointed arch was thus introduced, and it was soon seen that it offered great facilities for construction, and also for beauty of form. A change was thus commenced which ended only with the entire disuse of the semicircular arch, and the establishment of what we now call Gothic Architecture. This has been divided into three distinct styles, answering to certain periods of time, as below:—

EARLY ENGLISH, or 13th century, extending from the commencement of the reign of John to the close of that of Henry III.

DECORATED, or 14th century, from the commencement of Edward I. to the end of Edward III.

PERPENDICULAR, or 15th century, from the commencement of Richard II. to the end of Henry VII.

The latter part of each of these periods was one of transition, and therefore the terms 13th, 14th, and 15th centuries must only be taken in a general sense.

In the last chapter on architecture, we slightly traced the gradual transitions from the heavy masses of the pure Norman buildings, to the comparatively light ones which succeeded, but it will be necessary here to enlarge a little more on the subject. The change commenced in the latter part of the reign of Henry II., and continued to increase partly through that of Richard I., when towards the end of his reign it gradually emerged into the succeeding style; the heavy Norman architecture gradually gave way, a greater lightness and loftiness were introduced in the piers, the capitals were richly covered with foliage more closely resembling the Corinthian form, the angles of the abacus were frequently cut off, the mouldings lost much of their Norman character, and the tooth ornament, which is so characteristic of the next style, began to be introduced. The pointed arch was used along with the round one, both in pier arches and in windows and doors, and throughout this period we find a mixture of the two styles, the new growing as it were gradually from the ruins of the old, until in the commencement of the thirteenth century, or the beginning of the reign of John, it rose in all its purity, and the cumbrous Norman entirely disappeared. Of the buildings of the Transition period the following may be mentioned. Canterbury Cathedral (1175 to 1184), alluded to before as the most valuable, in showing the gradual change from one style to the other. The round portico of the Temple Church, London* (1185), which displays many of the characteristics of both styles, the pointed arch being used for the piers, but the round arch for the clerestory windows and arcades. The hall of the castle of Oakham, now used as the County Hall, displays in its capitals and corbels some of the finest sculpture we possess of this period. Oxford Cathedral is of this date, and exhibits a curious example of the alternate use of the pointed and round-headed arch, in the windows, and for the support of the central tower. Rothwell Church, Northamptonshire, is also of this date, the west door of which is a good example of a pointed arch with Norman ornaments, while the capitals of the shafts display more of the character of the early English.

In the buildings of this transition there is frequently much picturesque beauty, the sculptures are executed with great freedom and variety of design, and the details of the two styles harmonise well together. The abandonment of Norman forms and the adoption of the new ones was so gradual, that we can scarcely determine when the new style begins, for we see in the earlier examples of early English some Norman feature or other occasionally remaining, but about the beginning of the thirteenth century these seem to have entirely disappeared.

* See page 295.

THE EARLY ENGLISH STYLE.

The style which succeeded the transition was named by Beckman the Early English Style, and by that name it is commonly known. Many of the finest buildings we have are in this style; most of our cathedrals have portions of it, and one at least, Salisbury, is built entirely in it.

The earliest building we have of pure Early English is the choir of Lincoln Cathedral, and it is curious to find that at this early date, 1195, the Norman ideas had been entirely laid aside. This building exhibits the style not only in its utmost purity, but in its greatest beauty; all its details are conceived and executed with the greatest delicacy and freedom, and all who wish to see this style in perfection, should see the choir of Lincoln. The nave is in the same style, but is about fifty years later, and is much plainer.

The Cathedral of Salisbury is, with the exception of the spire, almost entirely in this style, but it is much more plain in its details than Lincoln, for which reason, and from its lancet windows being wider than usual, it is not so pleasing in its general appearance as most buildings of the style.

The Galilee, or western porch of Ely Cathedral, 1215, is one of the richest and most beautiful examples of Early English which we have in the kingdom.

The choir of Rochester, 1225, and a great part of Worcester Cathedral, are good examples of this style.

Wells Cathedral is a well known example, and its west front, with its gorgeous display of statuary, is the finest design of the kind we have (1239).

Another magnificent front, entirely different from anything else, is that of Peterborough Cathedral, with its three splendid and lofty arches (1238).

The body of the Temple Church, which was added to the more ancient round church in 1240, and the Chapter Houses of Lichfield and Oxford, also belong to this style, as do also numerous parish churches in all parts of the kingdom.

Many of our finest monastic remains belong to this period.

Of the domestic buildings of this period, examples still remain in various parts of the kingdom either of entire houses or parts, of which the following are some of the principal:—Aydon Castle, Northumberland; Little Wenham Hall, Sussex; and Stoke Say, Shropshire; the last being rather late in the style.

Early English buildings are chiefly distinguished from the Norman by their greater comparative lightness, and the prevalence of vertical lines instead of horizontal. Externally we find the buildings much more lofty, and lighted by long narrow pointed windows, the buttresses instead being little more than pilasters, as in the Norman style, have a bold projection, and being generally finished with either pediments or pinnacles add greatly to the effect of the building.

The roofs, too, in consequence of the greater facility of vaulting, are considerably higher in pitch than the Norman; and the towers being usually surmounted by spires add further to the appearance of loftiness, and make the comparison between them and the Norman still more marked.

Internally, we find that the heavy masses of piers are no longer seen, but are replaced by bundles of slender shafts, which support pointed arches and light and lofty vaulting, instead of the round arches and flat ceilings or heavy vaults of the Norman. The architects having found the power which the new principle gave them, seem to have run to the opposite extreme of their former work, and to have carried out the new idea with the utmost temerity.

Towers.—The church towers of this style, as was said before, are usually surmounted by a spire, which is sometimes very lofty and either plain or ribbed at the angles, and sometimes crocketted. It sometimes rises from a parapet, and at others fits on the top of the tower, when it is called a *broach* spire. In the best specimens of towers, an arcade runs along the upper belfry story, some of the arches of which are pierced for windows. There is generally a richly moulded door on the west side, and the middle story has in general only a plain window. The buttresses either overlap the angles or project at right-angles to the side.

Windows.—The single light windows are almost without exception of the kind known as lancet windows, that is, long and narrow, and with pointed heads. They are usually quite plain, and are so characteristic of the style that it has been called the *lancet style*. They are sometimes in pairs, threes, fives, or sevens, with a general dripstone extending over all. The window in the transept of York Cathedral, well known as the "Five Sisters," is a very beautiful example of the combination of five very long and graceful lancets, and being filled with elaborately pencilled stained glass has a most fine and solemn effect. Some good examples also occur in the south transept of Beverley Minster. These are all richly moulded, and have shafts in the jambs; but in small churches they are frequently quite plain, having only a simple dripstone. Circular windows are also used, as well as another of an acutely pointed oval form, commonly known as the *vesica piscis*. Both these forms are found in the transept of Beverley Minster, mentioned above. Where only two lancets are used there is frequently a small circle or a lozenge pierced in the wall above the lancets, but under the dripstone, and which in the inside formed one window. These openings were in time enlarged, and, by an easy transition, regular tracery was formed; and we find in the latter part of this style, when it was verging on the next, windows of two or three lights with circles of tracery in the head. This was the origin of the tracery which was afterwards to form so important a feature, and on which the chief beauty of the succeeding styles mainly depends.

Doorways.—These are almost universally deeply recessed, and richly moulded, having shafts with capitals and bases on the jambs, and frequently ornamented with the tooth and other ornaments in the head. They are almost always pointed, but the round arch is still in some few instances retained, particularly in double doors when two arches have to be combined in one; but in all cases they may be distinguished from Norman by their deeply cut round and hollow mouldings, as well as by the capitals and bases of the shafts.

Porches.—The early English porch differs from the Norman in being brought forward from the wall, leaving a considerable space between that and the front of the porch. This space is generally lighted by open windows on the sides, and ornamented in the interior with arcades, and having a stone bench running down each side. The front usually terminates in a very acutely pointed gable,

sometimes plain and sometimes moulded, and having a rich doorway, which is in general elaborately moulded and ornamented with the tooth ornament. The jambs have rows of shafts with capitals and bases, similar to the doorways before described, but frequently much more rich.

Buttresses.—Unlike those of Norman buildings, the buttresses of this period project boldly from the wall, and tend greatly to take off the flatness of appearance so observable in the former style. They are commonly finished by pediments, and are sometimes connected by arches with the clerestory, when they are called *flying buttresses*.

Pinnacles are now used, but they are more like turrets, being much larger than those of the succeeding styles. They are in general ornamented with small shafts and arches.

Piers and Pillars.—It is in these, more perhaps than in anything else, that we see the difference between a Norman and an early English building. In the former the architects, being deficient in mediæval skill, sought to remedy this defect, and to give strength to their buildings, by piling together large masses of masonry; while in the latter period, trusting to their scientific knowledge and the new principle of vaulting which they had just developed, they gradually reduced the strength of their piers, first by cutting their heavy round mass into a bundle of pillars all connected together, and afterwards separating these pillars, so that at the last, the piers frequently consisted only of a central pillar, surrounded by a number of small detached shafts connected with the central one merely by the capital and base and by bands placed at intervals on the shafts. Some fine specimens of this kind of pillar occur at Salisbury, where the lightness is carried to such excess, that it seems wonderful how such slender shafts can support such heavy weights. These elaborate pillars occur only in the cathedrals or large churches; in smaller buildings the pillars are generally plain, either round or octagonal; but they may always be distinguished by the moulding and foliage of their capitals, and by their bases.

Capitals, Foliage, and Bases.—These differ in many essential particulars from those of the Norman period, though in early buildings some of the Norman characters still remain. The abacus, the upper moulding or member

Capital, from Salisbury Cathedral.

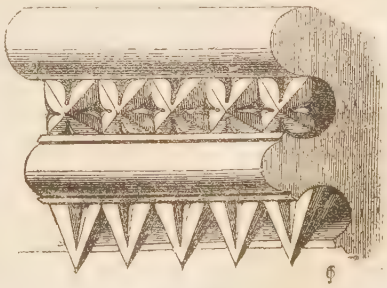
of the capital, is in Norman work square; in *pure* early English it is circular; its section in the first is square sloped with the lower edge or chamfered off; in the last it is moulded, having two bold round mouldings, with a deep hollow between them. The foliage of this period is very different from that of any other. It consists of a kind of leaf rising with a stiff stem from the neck-moulding of the capital, and turning over in various graceful forms under the abacus. It is from the circumstance of its rising from a stem, that it is sometimes called *stiff-leaved foliage*; but nothing can be further from stiffness, the utmost grace and elegance being displayed in its design and execution. It sometimes takes the form shown in the specimens from Salisbury, and sometimes that of a trefoil, as in the one from Lincoln. The

Capital, from Lincoln Cathedral.

bases are well moulded, the general section being that of two round mouldings, the lower projecting beyond the upper, and a deep hollow between.

Arches.—These are in most cases acutely pointed, but no general rule can be given, as much variety in form prevailed at this period. The round arch is still occasionally used, particularly in triforiums, as at York. In plain parish churches the pier arches are frequently only plainly chamfered, but in large buildings they are commonly deeply and elaborately moulded, and relieved with lines of tooth ornament.

Mouldings and Ornaments.—These are of the greatest importance in all the styles of Gothic architecture, as they serve to distinguish one style from another when other tests fail. In the Early English they are particularly distinct and striking, and consist chiefly of bold rounds separated by deep hollows, thus producing an effect of light and shade much more remarkable than that produced by the Norman mouldings. Intermixed with these mouldings, and frequently occupying one or more of the deep hollows, is an ornament known as the "tooth ornament" or "dogstooth," and which is as characteristic of the

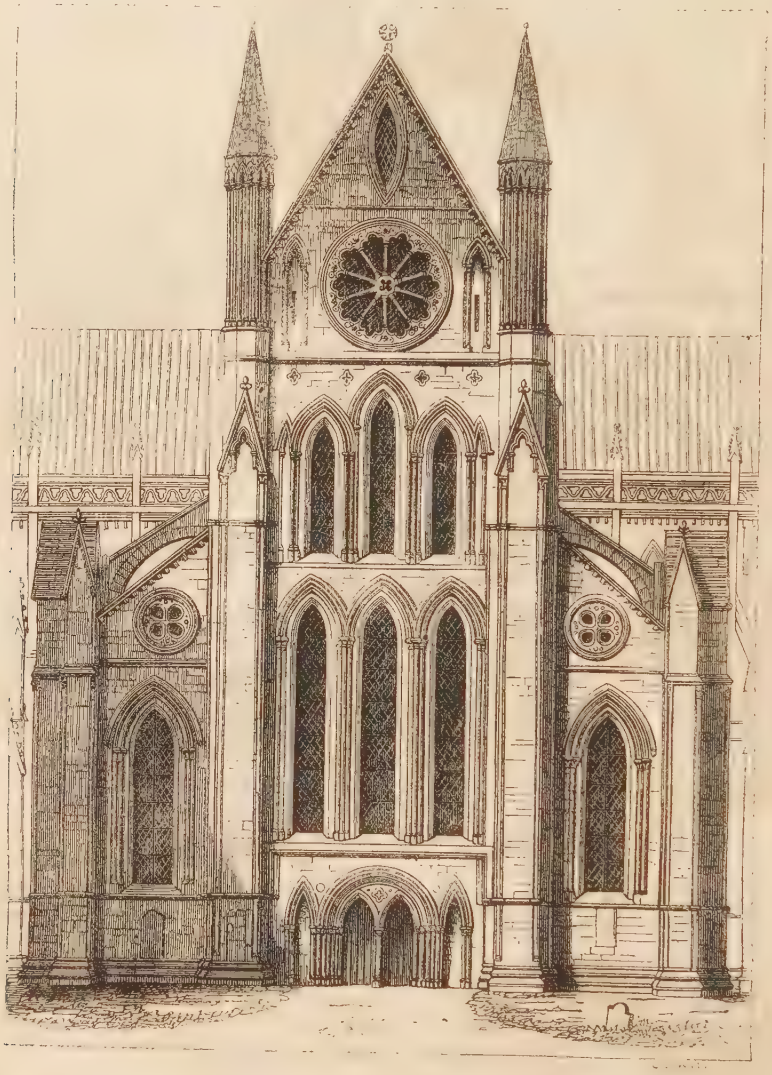


Tooth Ornament, from Lincoln Cathedral.

Early English style as the zig-zag is of the Norman. It consists of a series of small pyramids cut into the form of

four leaves, and which, when acute and seen in profile, have something the appearance of a row of teeth. It is profusely used in all situations where ornament can be introduced. Flat surfaces are frequently ornamented with foliage, or cut into small squares each of which is filled with a flower. This kind of work is called *Diaper*.

The FRONTS of Early English buildings are, in general, very fine compositions, and though plainer in detail than those of the succeeding styles, they have more elegance of proportion. A good idea of their general arrangement may be formed from the one here given of the south transept of Beverley Minster.



South Transept of Beverley Minster.

CHAPTER LVII.

Accession of Edward I., surnamed Longshanks.—Adventures of Edward in the Holy Land.—His Return to Guienne.—His Landing in England and Coronation.—Persecution of the Jews.—Conquest of Wales.

IMMEDIATELY after the funeral of Henry III., the barons proclaimed his son Edward, then absent on the crusade, to be king. Walter Merton was nominated chancellor of the kingdom, and the earl of Gloucester, the earl of Cornwall, a son of the king of the Romans, and Walter Gifford, archbishop of York, were appointed regents. So wise were the measures taken, and so general was the assent of all parties, that no disturbance of the public peace took place, as had hitherto frequently happened on the death of a king. The prince Edward was accepted by the people as their ruler, and his accession was attended with less difficulty or opposition than that of any of his predecessors.

When Louis IX. departed on his second expedition to the Holy Land, he turned aside to attack the Bey of Tunis, and, instead of proceeding direct to Syria, he landed on the shores of Africa. This deviation from his original course was probably due to the representations of his brother Charles of Anjou, who in the battle of Grandella (A.D. 1266) had won from Manfred the crown of Italy. There was some pretence of a claim to tribute possessed by

DEPARTURE OF EDWARD AND ELEANOR TO THE HOLY LAND.

the kings of Sicily against Tunis, but it is probable that the real object of the expedition lay in the hope of plundering that immense wealth which was supposed to be treasured up in the African cities.

The forces of Louis soon made themselves masters of the town of Carthage, but they had landed during the summer, and the excessive heat of that unaccustomed climate added to the want of good water and provision, produced severe sickness among the crusaders. The character of Louis IX. is one with few parallels in any age. Perversions of the religious sentiment were common at the time in which he lived: he was not free from their influence, and his piety was mingled with superstition and austerity. But, in times of difficulty and danger, when the hypocrite falls away, and the true is distinguished from the false his fine humanity and nobility of soul shone out in a manner which demands from posterity its highest meed of honour. While his soldiers were dying by hundreds around him, he was in the midst of them, giving up every comfort and running every risk, for the sake of giving them comfort. At length he was himself smitten with the disease, and, feeling his death approaching, he lay down calmly to wait the inevitable event. In his last moments we are informed that he thought only of the sufferings of his family and of the best form of words which might tend to console them. "My friends," he said, "grieve not for me: I have finished my course. It is right that I, as your chief, should lead the way; one day you must all follow me; keep yourselves ready for the journey." Such were the last words of this remarkable man, known in French history by the name of Saint Louis.

When Edward received information of the course taken by his ally, he also proceeded to Tunis, but on his arrival there, he found that Louis was dead, and that less than one half of his army were remaining. The progress of the disease, however, had been stayed, and the remaining portion of the French army, deprived of the guidance of their leader, had made terms with the Bey of Tunis, and appeared rather disposed to stay where they were than to tempt further perils in the Holy Land. The English soldiers appear to have been in some degree infected with the same pusillanimous spirit. They re-crossed the Mediterranean to Sicily, and passed the winter at Trapani. Edward had restored unanimity to his troops by the declaration, which he made with all the solemnity of an oath, that if every man of them should desert him, he would go on to Acre attended by his groom.

On breaking up his winter quarters, Edward found that his effective force did not exceed 1,000 men. With these he set sail from Sicily early in the spring and proceeded to Acre, one of the few conquests of the crusaders in the East which still remained to them. Small as the force was with which Edward landed, his arrival produced consternation among the Moslems, and proportionate joy among the Christians. The fame of Richard Cœur-de-Lion was still fresh in their minds, and Edward, already distinguished in the field of war, might be expected to emulate the deeds of that renowned king.

At the time of Edward's arrival, Acre was threatened by the sultan of Babylon, who had assembled an army without its walls, and had made preparations for an assault. When the ships of the English prince appeared in the distance, the sultan at once retreated into the desert, and passed into Egypt. Edward led his army into the interior, and carried the city of Nazareth by storm. Nearly two hundred years had passed since the banner of the cross first waved over Jerusalem, and its streets ran down with blood shed by Christian hands. In those two hundred years the world had made some progress in humanity. The advance of the arts of life, and the spread of commerce, had done something to enhance the value of human life, and to promote that intellectual activity which is ever opposed to bloodshed. But over the spirit of fanaticism these things had no influence—the most cruel spirit that has oppressed mankind in the guise of an angel of light. The crusaders still believed that the blood of the Moslem was an acceptable sacrifice to Heaven; they still believed that the Saracens ought to be excluded from that mercy which every Christian might ask from his fellow, and that in deeds of wholesale murder they were doing God service. The Moslems at Nazareth were butchered as at Jerusalem; and the knightly Edward led and directed the slaughter.

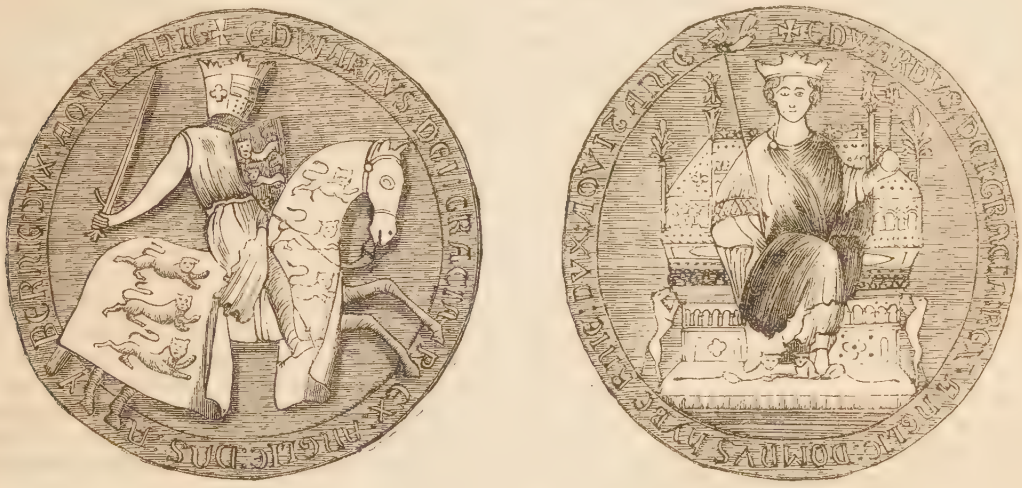
Soon after the massacre, the prince, with many of his soldiers, was attacked by sickness, and was compelled to return to Acre. Here the army of the cross remained for a period of fifteen months, which seem to have been passed in inactivity. Some few skirmishes took place with the Saracens, during which the crusaders maintained their old reputation for valour, and some few incursions were made upon the surrounding country, which, in one instance, resulted in the plunder of a caravan, and in another, in the capture of two castles; but these were the only advantages gained by the Christian troops during that period. This was not the result of indolence on the part of Edward, or of any lack of will for more important operations, but it appears that the force at his command was insufficient for such purposes. The number of his troops did not exceed seven thousand men, who were composed of all the nations of Europe, were imperfectly disciplined, and after a time showed themselves disaffected towards his authority. Such proved to be the case when they found that Edward had brought little money with him, and that he received no reinforcements.

On the other hand, the town of Acre had been so strongly fortified, in some degree by Edward himself, that the Moslem leaders were deterred from attacking it. The presence of the English prince, however, caused them great annoyance; and since open measures were out of the question, they determined to get rid of him by assassination. An elaborate scheme was contrived for that purpose. The emir of Jaffa sent letters to the prince with presents expressing his desire of becoming a Christian. Edward returned a courteous reply, and on this pretence a lengthened correspondence took place between them. The messengers of the emir, frequently visiting the prince, were at length permitted to come and go without question or examination. One evening when Edward was lying in his tent, unarmed and alone, the servant of the emir appeared at the door and made his usual obeisance. Edward bade him enter, and as he did so and knelt to present a letter, he suddenly drew a dagger with the other hand, and made a blow at the prince's heart. Edward, whose personal strength was little inferior to that of Cœur-de-Lion, caught his hand and turned the dagger aside, receiving a slight wound in the arm. He then threw the murderer to the ground and slew him with his own weapon.

The appearance of the prince's wound soon showed that the dagger had been poisoned, and Edward therefore made his will, and believed that his last hour was approaching. But there was an English surgeon at Acre whose skill appears to have been greater than was usual in his day, and who cut away the envenomed parts of the wound. The order of the Templars also were noted for their knowledge of medicine, and the Grand Master of the order sent his choicest drugs to assist the cure. These means, or a natural strength of constitution, subdued the effects of the poison, and the prince recovered. His wife Eleanor, who was famed for her virtues, and who was tenderly attached to him, may probably have given her best attentions to promote his recovery, but the account of her having sucked the poison from the wound, must be rejected as void of truth. The story, like others which have been received as forming part of English history, is little else than a poet's fiction, and when referred to the chronicles of the time to which it refers, falls to the ground for want of evidence.

expressed his surprise at such a demonstration of grief. Referring to an infant son of Edward and Eleanor, who had lately died, he told the prince that he appeared to mourn more for the death of his old father, than for his own child. Edward replied, "The loss of my child is one that I may hope to repair, but the death of a father is an irreparable loss."

When Edward arrived at Rome (February, A.D. 1273), the pope was absent at Civita Vecchia, and thither the prince followed him. Edward met with a warm and hospitable reception from the pontiff, and while in his presence he demanded vengeance upon the murderers of Henry d'Almaine. But the demand came too late. Simon de Montfort was already dead, his brother Guy had disappeared, and his place of refuge was not known, while the Count Aldobrandini was too powerful a noble to be proceeded against, otherwise than by a nominal examination which produced no result. It was clear that the count was guilty, not of the murder, but only of giving shelter to the assassins, one of whom was his son-in-law, and under these



Great Seal of Edward I.

The sultan, who had other enemies to engage his attention, now adopted more legitimate means of getting rid of the troublesome invaders. He sent messengers to Edward with offers of peace, and a truce was ultimately concluded for ten years. Edward had received from his father urgent entreaties to return, and he was probably glad of an opportunity of putting an end to an irksome period of inactivity. At the close of the year 1272, he set sail from Acre for Sicily. On his arrival at Trapani he was met by an invitation from Gregory X., the reigning pope, to visit him at Rome. The pontiff, who was newly elected, had, as archbishop of Liege, accompanied Edward to Palestine, and a firm friendship had arisen between them. The prince therefore accepted the invitation, and having crossed the straits of Messina, he proceeded by land through the south of Italy.

On passing through Calabria, he was met by messengers who informed him of the death of his father. The news appears to have affected him very deeply. Charles of Anjou, who was then with him, and who was a man of a remarkably unfeeling and ferocious character, circumstances, the English king was compelled to restrain his desire for vengeance.

Quitting Civita Vecchia, Edward continued his journey through northern Italy. Everywhere the ardent children of the South received him with welcome and honour. The enthusiasm for the crusades, soon to be altogether extinguished, showed itself as strongly now as in the days of Robert or of Richard, and the people hailed the young English king with the title of Champion of the Cross. Their sympathies were excited less by his deeds of personal prowess in the East, which, limited as they were, were exaggerated by the imaginative colouring of the minstrels, than by the wound he had received in the holy cause. They remembered, too, that amidst the general apathy of Europe he was the only prince who yet remained to bear aloft the banner of the cross.

Edward crossed the Alps, and took his way through France to Paris, having received by the way various messengers, who made him acquainted with the state of affairs in England. At Paris he was honourably entertained by the French king, Philip le Hardi, to whom he rendered

homage for those territories of which Philip was feudal suzerain. It is matter for surprise that after so long an absence, and when a throne was waiting his acceptance, Edward should show no desire to return to England. It is at least evident that he must have felt full confidence in the security of his succession or in his own power of suppressing rebellion. Instead of proceeding from Paris to his own country, he took the way to Guienne, where he remained for several months. The real motives for this step are by no means clear, but it is probable that Edward had cause to suspect the existence of certain plots against his life. The pope had warned him to beware of the swords of assassins, and he had reason to dread the ambition of Philip, whose character was very different from that of his father, and who was believed to entertain designs for obtaining possession of all the continental provinces held by the English.

The suspicions of Edward appear to have been confirmed by an incident which took place in May, A.D. 1274, when he was still in Guienne. According to the usages of chivalry, it was permitted for one knight to challenge another to a trial of skill in the tournament; and such a challenge would scarcely be refused by any man, whatever his degree, who had a regard for his knightly fame. The count of Chalons, a distinguished soldier, sent a message of this kind to Edward, desiring to break a lance with him in the tournament. The warlike king had no desire to evade the challenge; and, waiving his high rank, he consented to meet the count upon even terms. On the day appointed, Edward rode to the spot, attended by an escort of a thousand men; but when he arrived there, he saw to his surprise that his adversary was accompanied by nearly two thousand. The king had already heard rumours of some treachery said to be intended by the count, but, with the temper of a brave man, he had despised them. The warlike array before him now recalled those rumours to his memory, in a manner not to be disregarded. The intended tournament was converted into a sanguinary engagement, in which all the men of both sides took part, and Edward himself performed some gallant feats of arms.

The English, seeing the advantage of numbers so greatly on the side of the enemy, laid aside all the laws of chivalry, and determined to win the day as best they might. The cross-bowmen, whose skill was already noted throughout Europe, obtained an immediate advantage against the French foot-soldiers, and drove them from the field. They then joined in the unequal conflict of the cavalry, and stabbed the horses of many of the French knights, or cut their saddle-girths, and so brought them to the ground. The count of Chalons, furious at the resistance he met with, forced his way to the king, and after having in vain attempted to unhorse him with his lance, closed with him, and grasping him round the neck, endeavoured to drag him down. The count was celebrated for his great strength, but the king was no less remarkable for that quality, and he remained firmly in his saddle; while, forcing his horse suddenly to one side, the count was pulled from his saddle, and fell heavily to the ground. He was speedily remounted by some of his own party, but he was so severely wounded or bruised that he called for quarter. Enraged at his treachery, Edward dealt him several heavy blows by way of reply, and then, indeed, gave him his life, but compelled him to surrender his sword, and accept the boon from the hands of a common soldier—an act by which, according to the laws of chivalry, the count was disgraced for ever. In spite of the disparity of numbers, the result of this engagement was decidedly in favour of the English. They took many of the French knights prisoners, and great numbers of the foot-soldiers were butchered. So fierce was the affray, and so large a number of those engaged were slain, that it was afterwards known by the name of the "little battle of Chalons."

Having thus read a lesson to all conspirators against his person, Edward at length made preparations to return to England. Having sent directions for his coronation, he took his way through France, passing through the town of Montreuil. Here he stopped to arrange some disputes which had arisen in the previous reign, between the English and the Flemings, and which are worthy of notice, as illustrating the commercial relations of the two countries in those days. For a certain number of years previously, the counts of Flanders had been accustomed to supply for the service of the kings of England a certain number of foot soldiers, who were received on hire. In the reign of Henry III., these supplies ceased to be demanded, but the countess of Flanders claimed a sum of money as arrears of pay, and on payment being refused, she seized all the English wool—then largely exported from the country—to be found in her territory. The Flemings were then the chief manufacturers of woollen and other cloths, and Henry retaliated by detaining all their manufactured goods then in England, and by prohibiting all commerce between the two countries. This prohibition caused great loss and damage to the Flemings, whose looms were thus rendered idle, and their workmen left without employment. The object of the countess was the renewal of trade with England, and to this end she made application to Edward, and offered a public apology for the wrong which had been committed. The king acted with wisdom on this occasion, and having sought the advice of some London merchants he removed the prohibition.

Edward landed at Dover on the 2nd of August, A.D., 1274, and seventeen days afterwards he was crowned, with his wife Eleanor, at Westminster. The return of the king from the Holy Land was hailed by the people with great demonstrations of joy. According to Holinshed, the king and queen were received "with all joy that might be devised; the streets were hung with rich cloths of silk, arras, and tapestry; the aldermen and burgesses of the city threw out of their windows handfulls of gold and silver, to signify the great gladness which they conceived of his safe return; the conduits ran plentifully with white wine and red, that each creature might drink his fill." So readily did the people forget the injustice and cruelties of their former monarchs, and so enthusiastically did they welcome each new ruler, whom they were willing to hope might bless the land with peace and prosperity.

Edward's first exercise of power was by acts of extreme and merciless tyranny, directed, not towards his Christian subjects, whose liberties he showed no disposition to invade, but towards the unhappy Jews, who had already suffered such repeated persecutions that it may almost be considered matter for surprise that any of their race were left in the country. On ascending the throne Edward found the royal treasury almost exhausted, and there is no doubt that his proceedings against the Jews were dictated by the

necessity of raising money. That fanatical spirit which had led him to direct the slaughter of unresisting Moslems, may probably have justified him in his own eyes, in his cruel persecutions of Jews, who were no less regarded as infidels, and as unworthy of the protection of the laws. The pretext put forward—for the day had arrived when at least some pretext was required—was that the Jews had tampered with the coinage of the realm, which had been found to be generally clipped and adulterated. There was no evidence whatever to fix upon this unhappy people as the authors of the crime, but their riches offered a temptation to cupidity, and their helplessness admitted of their being condemned without fear of the consequences. The hatred against the Jews was universal, and the appearance of one of them before a Christian court was followed as a matter of course by his condemnation.

The clipped coin was so common as to be found all over the kingdom; but immediately that such a piece of money was discovered in the possession of a Jew, he was seized, submitted to the form of a trial, and hanged without mercy. It is related that two hundred and eighty of both sexes were executed in London, besides which great numbers were put to death in other towns. The property of all those who were thus judicially murdered, reverted to the crown; and, therefore, it is not difficult to see why these acts of persecution were pushed to so great an extent.

When the royal coffers had been replenished by such means as these, Edward directed his attention to carrying out certain schemes, on which he entered with calmness and determination. Influenced by as restless an ambition as any of his predecessors, he directed his efforts to a field, on which, as it appeared, they had the best prospect of ultimate success. Instead of carrying his army across the channel to subdue provinces, between which and his throne the sea would continue to flow, he proposed to himself the conquest of the whole island of Great Britain. He asserted his right to do so by virtue of a feudal superiority—a claim which as far as it had reference to Scotland, was wholly without foundation.

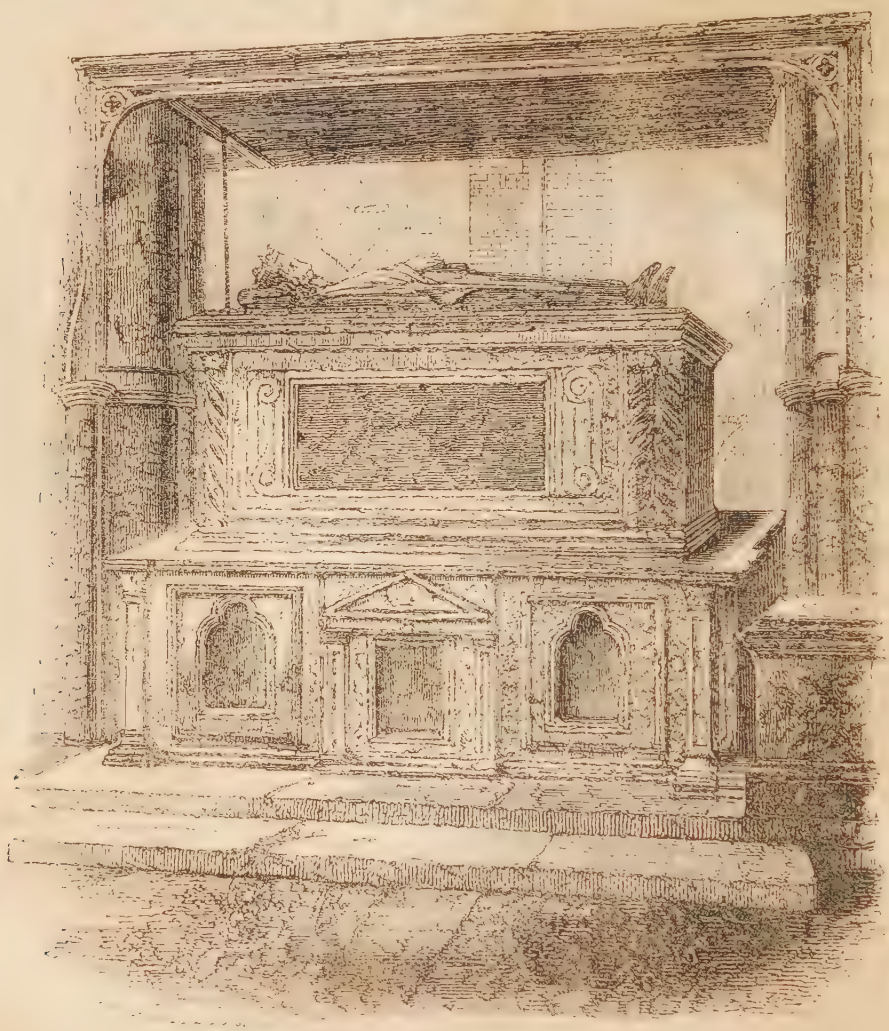
The first expedition of Edward was directed against the Welsh, whom so many of the Anglo-Norman kings had in vain attempted to subdue. Politically considered, there is no doubt that this expedition was wisely ordered, and that the early conquest of those brave mountaineers has proved in the highest degree beneficial to this country. At the time of the accession of Edward, civilisation had made important progress in England, while in Wales it had been stationary; but if we examine the social condition of that people after the conquest, as described in the writings of a contemporary, and one of their own countrymen, we shall find their national character depicted in colours which attract our respect and admiration. In time of war they were brave, or even fierce; but when the war was over, they showed that they could appreciate the blessings of peace and they betook themselves to their ordinary avocations, and exchanged the rites of hospitality. In spite of the aggressive wars made upon them from time to time, any Englishman who visited them in their mountains, as a simple traveller without arms, was sure of safe conduct and a kind reception. If he arrived in the morning he was entertained until the evening by the young women, who played and sang to him with the harp. There was a harp in every cottage, and with it was to be found at least one person whose skill could bring out its sweetest sounds. The people are described as possessed of great natural dignity and freedom of speech, which gave them confidence even in replying to princes.

If we may credit this account of one of their countrymen, we find here one of the rare instances given in history of a people displaying many of the amenities of social life while yet in the infancy of civilisation: deriving their code of honour, laws, and manners from the influences of unwritten memorials of the past—from songs and traditions. The mountain maidens, who cheered the tired traveller with the music of the harp, had no better clothing than the skins of sheep and goats. The chiefs, whose sway over a thousand warriors was absolute, and who bore themselves with undaunted mien in the presence of kings, kept state among bare walls and benches, and rode out to meet the English chivalry upon the rough ponies of the mountains. It is related that when Henry II. passed through the country, he looked with a contemptuous eye upon the poverty of the inhabitants, until he perceived among them a pride greater than his own, and based not upon gaudy trappings or outward show, but upon the consciousness of a manhood which had no need of decorations. "These people are poor," said a mountaineer to the king, "but such as they are, thou shalt never subdue them; that is reserved for God in his wrath."

It has been already related that during the contests between Henry III. and the De Montfort faction, Llewellyn, the chief of the north principality, had supported the cause of the earl of Leicester, and, at the battle of Evesham, had fought on his side. When that final struggle was over, and the Welsh chieftain had returned to his native hills, he still retained his regard for the fallen family of De Montfort, and sent to offer his hand in marriage to Eleanor, daughter of the deceased earl. The offer was accepted, and the young lady, in company with her brother Emeric, set sail from France to reach her affianced husband; but the vessel having been intercepted by some English ships, the bride and her escort were conveyed to the court of Edward, who detained them prisoners. Exasperated by this act of oppression, Llewellyn collected together his men-at-arms, and determined to revenge himself for the insult he had sustained. It is not certain when the first acts of hostility took place on the part of the Welsh or English, but there is no doubt that Edward had for some time past been pursuing, by various covert measures, the schemes he had in view. He administered bribes without stint among the mountain chiefs, and, profiting by long-standing feuds which existed between them, he secured many of them to his side. Actuated by a feeling of jealousy, David, the brother of Llewellyn, placed himself among those who gathered round the royal standard, and with him was Rees-ap-Meredith, the chief or prince of South Wales.

The ground of quarrel which Edward preferred against Llewellyn was, that the latter had refused to obey the summons to appear before the king and render homage as one of the vassals of the crown. On receiving that summons, Llewellyn replied that his life was in danger from the number of his enemies, who, in violation of a recent treaty between him and Edward, had been received at the court. The Welsh prince demanded that a safe conduct should be granted to him; that ten hostages, chosen from

the English nobility, should be sent as security for his safe return, and that his bride should immediately be given up to him. Edward refused these conditions, with the exception of the safe conduct, and it is evident that he had no real desire that his vassal should withdraw his refusal. The king's preparations for the intended expedition were now matured, a large army was ready to take the field, and the church had excommunicated the Welsh prince as a traitor to the crown.



Tomb of Henry III., in Westminster Abbey

At Easter, A.D. 1277, Edward began his march to Wales, and having crossed the Dee near Chester, he entered Flintshire. A fleet, which had been despatched for the purpose, co-operated with him, by cutting off from Llewellyn all supplies from the isle of Anglesey. The expedition was well timed; for when these operations had been effectually carried out, and the Welsh prince driven to the mountains, the storms of winter aided the attacks of his enemies. Deprived of food and succour, the condition of Llewellyn soon became wretched in the extreme, and he was compelled to submit to such terms of peace as Edward might please to offer. Those terms were hard indeed. A payment of fifty thousand pounds was demanded, together with the cession of the whole of Llewellyn's territories, except the isle of Anglesey, which was also to revert to the crown, in case the prince died without heir male, and for which, during his life, he was to pay a yearly rent of one thousand marks. The king afterwards remitted the enormous ransom demanded; and, had he not done so, it may be questioned whether it would have been possible to raise so much money throughout the principality. In return for these concessions of Llewellyn, Edward promised to release Eleanor de Montfort; but he showed considerable reluctance to fulfil that promise; and many months elapsed before the Welsh prince obtained his bride.

Edward spared no pains to secure the advantage he had obtained. He rewarded liberally those among the Welsh chiefs who had supported him, and bestowed what are called honours upon those traitors to their native soil. David received the order of knighthood at the king's hands, and with it the hand of the daughter of the earl of Ferrers. But when the Welsh prince had escaped from the influences of the court, and breathed once more the free air of the hills, he

regretted the folly which had induced him to sell the independence of his country, and to league himself with its oppressors. Other causes soon operated to increase this feeling. The English, not content with the large territories hatred of their enemies, and in cries for vengeance. Allusion has been already made to the prophet Merlin, and to the effect exercised upon his fellow-countrymen by the predictions which bore his name. One of these, which

Edward I. Presenting his Infant Son to the Welsh.

they had conquered, made inroads upon the lands secured by treaty to the natives, cutting down the timber and committing other depredations. If the chiefs were exasperated by these proceedings, the people were unanimous in their was now remembered and repeated, was to the effect that when the English money should become circular the prince of Wales should be crowned in London. Edward had lately issued a new coinage of round halfpence and

farthings, and had issued a decree forbidding the penny to be divided into quarters, as had previously been done. The Welsh, therefore, thought they saw the time arrived to which the prediction referred, and interpreting that dark saying according to their own wild wishes, believed that it foreshadowed nothing less than the subjugation of the whole island to the countrymen of the prophet.

The impetuous descendants of the ancient Britons scarcely needed such old stories as these to prompt them to vengeance. David forgot the rewards he had received at the king's hands, and having effected a reconciliation with his brother Llewellyn, agreed to act in concert with him. On the 22nd of March, A.D. 1282, David suddenly descended from the Flintshire hills with a body of troops, and surprised the strong castle of Hawarden. Roger Clifford, the justiciary, was taken in his bed and made prisoner, and on the part of the garrison little resistance was made. This success emboldened the natives, who now rose on all sides to join the standard of their chiefs. Llewellyn led his men against the castles of Flint and Rhuddlan, and though repulsed from these strong fortresses, he inflicted great damage upon the English in other places, forcing them from their strongholds, and often driving them across the borders.

When the news of the insurrection was brought to Edward he refused to believe it; but it has been supposed that his surprise was rather feigned than real, and that he was not displeased to have a pretext for another expedition which should complete his conquest, and place it on a firm basis. He obtained money by means of a forced loan, levied upon all his subjects who had money to pay; and having collected an army, he advanced once more into North Wales, attended as before by a fleet. Among his forces were a large body of pioneers, who opened a passage for the troops through the woods and marshes, and enabled him to beat back the Welsh as far as the foot of Snowdon. The accounts which have reached us of this campaign are very obscure; and it is difficult to trace the successive encounters between the mountaineers and their assailants. It would appear, however, that the advantage was by no means all on one side, and that a pitched battle took place, in which the numerous army of the king was worsted. The fleet of the king had occupied the isle of Anglesey, whence the troops directed their offensive operations. A bridge of boats was laid across the Menai straits, where now the suspension bridge of Telford and the iron tube of Stephenson afford a safe and convenient passage. The Welsh had raised some entrenchments on the mainland, and there awaited the expected attack. During the absence of Edward, a body of his troops crossed over the straits before the bridge was quite completed, so that they were compelled to wade some distance through the water to reach the shore. The Welsh made no opposition to their landing, and even suffered them to approach their works; but meanwhile the tide was rising, and presently reached a height which rendered it impossible for the English to gain their boats. While in this position the mountaineers rushed out upon them, and drove them into the sea, where all those who escaped the sword were speedily engulfed. The loss to the English on this occasion numbered thirteen knights, seventeen esquires, and several hundred men-at-arms. Another engagement afterwards took place, at which Edward himself was defeated, and compelled to fly from the field, leaving several of his chief nobles among the number of the dead.

These successes caused great joy to Llewellyn and his associates, though the struggle which they so heroically maintained was, in reality, hopeless. Fresh troops were constantly arriving to the support of the king, while his numerous fleet offered them protection and support. Among the reinforcements were some mountaineers of the Basque provinces, well suited for that mode of warfare, in which agility of limb and rapidity of motion possessed a decided advantage over the slow operations of the English troops. The Basques followed the Welsh to their fastnesses, and there fought them in their own way, usually with the advantage of numbers. The natives were thus dislodged from their defences, driven from mountain to mountain, and compelled, inch by inch, to retreat.

But while such was the frequent result of these conflicts, the combined efforts of the Welsh leaders were attended with the success which has been described. Llewellyn trusted that the elements to which he owed his former defeat would now exert an influence in his favour, and that the rigours of winter would compel the king to quit the country. But Edward was too able a general to suffer himself to be so defeated. He undertook more vigorous measures, and while pressing the natives to the utmost with his own forces, he despatched a second army, which had recently been collected, into South Wales, for the purpose of attacking the enemy in the rear. Llewellyn immediately marched to meet this new danger, leaving his brother David to oppose the king. At Bailth, in the valley of the Wye, the Welsh prince found himself suddenly in the presence of a large force of English troops, who were encamped on the opposite side of the river. Llewellyn had advanced in front of his men, and descended a hill to watch the motions of the enemy. He had entered a barn, either for shelter or repose, when he was surprised by a party of English who had crossed the river. Hopeless as the contest was, the prince turned desperately on his assailants, struck his last blow for home and liberty, and then fell, pierced through the body by a spear. His head was cut off, and, by direction of Edward, was sent to London, where it was placed in the Tower, with a crown of willow round the brows. This order was given by the king, in derision of the prophecy of Merlin.

The independence of Wales was buried in the grave of Llewellyn. The king had indeed some further resistance to encounter, but it was unorganised and soon subdued, as far as active hostilities were concerned. Many of the native chiefs at once gave in their submission to the crown, but David maintained his opposition for six months, surrounded by a few followers, in the fastnesses of the mountains. At length he was betrayed into his enemies' hands, and was carried in chains to the castle of Rhuddlan. In the following month Edward brought the case of the captive before a parliament, hastily and irregularly summoned at Shrewsbury. That parliament assented obsequiously to whatever the king described as just and necessary; and, consequently, they condemned the Welsh prince to be dragged by a horse to the place of execution, because after receiving the order of knighthood from the king he had turned traitor; to be hung, because he had caused the murder of the knights in Hawarden castle; to have his bowels burned, because he had profaned the sacredness of Palm Sunday, the day on

which the deed was committed; and to be quartered, and have his limbs hung up in different places, because he had conspired against the king's life. This shameful sentence was not only carried into effect, but served for many years as a precedent in cases of high treason.

Edward now directed his attention to more peaceful measures for securing his conquest. He remained in Wales during another year, and occupied himself in enticing the natives as far as possible from their uncultivated habits, and in prevailing upon them to adopt fixed residences and English customs. To this end he divided the country into shires and hundreds, introduced English laws, which were generally enforced, and took measures for the restoration of tranquillity. He also gave charters conferring important privileges on some of the Welsh towns, and among others to Rhuddlan, Aberystwith, and Caernarvon. It happened that queen Eleanor bore her husband a son in the castle of Caernarvon, and Edward availed himself of that circumstance for political purposes. He called together a number of the chief men of the land, to whom he presented the infant as born among them, and of the same country. The child, he said, was Welsh, and as such he should be their prince. They supposed that a separate government was intended, since the infant had an elder brother, who undoubtedly was the heir to the English throne. The ardent nature of the Welsh eagerly caught at this revived hope of independence, and for some time they appeared to have regarded their young prince with feelings of loyalty and affection. Before long, however, the prince Alphonso, the elder brother, died, and it became evident that such hopes were illusory. From this time the principality of Wales became permanently annexed to the crown, and the title of Prince of Wales was given to the eldest son of the kings of England.

Edward secured his conquest by fortifying anew the castles of Conway and Caernarvon, and by building other fortresses, in which he placed strong garrisons and large stores of provisions. The lands at the foot of Snowdon he divided among his English barons, who also built castles and strongholds for purposes of defence. Such measures proved to be necessary for many years afterwards, for the mountaineers rebelled against these haughty and tyrannical lords, and showed their hatred by continued acts of hostility. Cruelty on the one hand was met by bloody deeds of vengeance on the other, and many of the English nobles sustained a perpetual siege in the strongholds they had built.

After the subjugation of Wales, four years passed away, during which Edward pursued no farther his schemes of aggrandisement. Showing little interest in the internal affairs of his kingdom, he passed over to the Continent, where his great ability was displayed in the arrangement of a dispute respecting the island of Sicily, which had arisen between the kings of France, Arragon, and the house of Anjou. Meanwhile the English people murmured at his absence; the word "government" was associated with the person of the king, and disorders had been increasing which it was believed his presence would terminate. Edward found himself compelled to return to his own country, and soon after he had done so, the course of events in Scotland aroused his ambition in that direction. It will be necessary briefly to trace the narrative of Scottish history, from the reign of Malcolm Caenmore to the date at which we have now arrived.

The influence exercised upon the Scottish people by their queen Margaret, the sister of Edgar Atheling, was in a high degree beneficial. The fair Saxon introduced among the fierce subjects of her husband the softer manners, the religion, and the dawning civilisation of the south. Malcolm, to whom the name of Caenmore (Great-head) was given, a rude and savage warrior, had conceived for his young bride an affection which knew no bounds. Ignorant of the truths of Christianity, he was induced to join in those devotional services which she habitually practised, and from a human love he learned, as other men have learned, to recognise the influence of a holier feeling. He could not read her books of prayer, but he would kiss them humbly to show his veneration for their use. His power was freely placed in the hands of his young queen, and as freely used by her in reforming abuses in the church, and in the introduction of various arts and accomplishments.

The people were savage and uncultivated, but they were generous, enthusiastic, and by no means deficient in a sort of rude chivalry. They had a wild imagination, fed by dark and gloomy traditions; they peopled the caves, the woods, the rivers, and the mountains, with spirits, elves, giants, and dragons; and are we to wonder that the Scots, a nation in whose veins the blood of the races of Scandinavia is unquestionably mingled, should at a very remote period have evinced an enthusiastic admiration for song and poetry;—that the harper was to be found amongst the officers who composed the personal state of the sovereign;—and that the country maintained a privileged race of wandering minstrels, who eagerly seized on the prevailing superstitions and romantic legends, and wove them, in rude but sometimes very expressive versification, into their stories and ballads;—who were welcome guests at the gate of every feudal castle, and fondly beloved by the great body of the people?*

While Margaret was spreading among the people the desire for knowledge, Malcolm was enlarging his dominions by conquest; and at the death of this prince (A.D. 1093) Scotland was, comparatively speaking, a united and consolidated nation. Then, however, various disorders took place, and when Alexander, son of Caenmore, at length obtained possession of the throne, the people seemed to have returned to their former condition of barbarism. In A.D. 1123, he was succeeded by his brother David, who, like his father, was sagacious and brave, an affectionate husband and a gallant soldier. David, as the uncle of the empress Matilda, daughter of Henry I., considered himself bound to support the title of that princess to the crown. The battle of Northallerton, already described, resulted in a severe defeat to the Scottish king, chiefly owing to the insubordination of a portion of his army. David exerted his power for the improvement of the condition of his subjects; he founded many monastic establishments, in which the learning of the times was preserved, and the sons of the nobles received their education.

David was succeeded by his son Malcolm IV., a brave and energetic prince, but one whose negotiations with England were unfortunate. Henry II., then in full possession of his power, obtained from the Scottish king the resumption of a portion of Northumberland, which had been ceded by Stephen. The more remote parts of his

* Tytler: History of Scotland.

kingdom were consolidated by Malcolm, who subdued a formidable insurrection among the fierce natives of Galloway. In the year 1165, Malcolm IV. died, and was succeeded by his son William, surnamed the Lion. This prince it was, who, having been made prisoner by Henry II., agreed to purchase his liberty by surrendering the independence of his kingdom. This shameful bargain was rescinded by Richard Cœur-de-Lion, who restored the relative positions of the two kingdoms to their former footing. Thus the kingdom of Scotland, properly so called, was restored to its independence, while the possessions in Westmoreland, Cumberland, Northumberland, and Lothian, all of which had made part of the heptarchy, continued to be held by a feudatory title from the English crown.

William was succeeded by his son Alexander II., A.D. 1214. During the reign of this prince there were few events of importance. He occupied himself rather with the internal affairs of the country, than with schemes of foreign aggression, and his policy was attended on the whole with favourable results. His son, Alexander III., succeeded to the throne in the year 1249, and the peace and prosperity by which nearly the whole of his reign was distinguished was to be referred in a great measure to the wisdom and patriotism of his ancestors. As a proof of the advance which had been made by the nation in power, we are told that at this time the army of the king amounted to 100,000 men, and 1,000 well appointed horsemen,* Alexander III. was only nine years of age when his father died, but in order to prevent foreign interference with the affairs of the kingdom, the boy was immediately crowned at Scone, and was knighted by the bishop of St. Andrews. Two years afterwards the English king gave his daughter Margaret in marriage to Alexander; and the nuptials between the two children were celebrated with great pomp at York, in December, A.D. 1251.

The only important danger which threatened Alexander arose from the attacks of the Norwegians, whose old quarrel with the Scots, respecting the islands of the Hebrides, was renewed in this reign. In the summer of 1264, when the young king had just attained to the years of manhood, Haco of Norway, a powerful chief and a renowned warrior, set sail at the head of a numerous force, for the Scottish shores. The Norwegian fleet arrived in the Frith of Clyde, while Alexander, assembling his troops, advanced to meet the invaders. A storm arose, by which the foreign armament sustained considerable damage; and its violence was scarcely abated when Haco reached the Bay of Largs, near the mouth of the Clyde. Here he was met and attacked by the Scottish army, which arrived in successive divisions. A protracted conflict of three days' duration took place there, and the plain, still covered with cairns and rude monuments of the slain, bears witness to the bloody and obstinate character of the struggle. Alexander at length gained a complete victory; the remnant of the invaders retreated to their ships, and effected their escape to the islands of Orkney, where the redoubted Haco died, either from wounds received in the battle or from mortification at its result. The victory of Largs terminated for ever the wars between Scotland and Norway, and, after a lapse of seventeen years, the two nations cemented their quarrels by a marriage between Margaret, the daughter of Alexander, and the youthful Eric, Haco's successor.

During a period of twenty years succeeding the Norwegian expedition, we may believe that the kingdom of Scotland enjoyed a condition of uninterrupted prosperity. The young king governed his people wisely and well, and undisturbed by enemies from without, he was able to repress the quarrels of those rival factions of the nobility which for many years had maintained towards each other a position of active or passive hostility. But heavy clouds were gathering round the future of this prosperous king, and at the moment of its greatest glory the royal house of Scotland was doomed to perish from the land. Margaret of England, the queen of Alexander, had died in 1275. Besides the daughter, whose marriage had restored peace to the nation, two sons had been born to him, one of whom died in childhood. In the year 1283 the queen of Norway expired, leaving only an infant daughter, who had also received the loved name of Margaret. A few months later the prince of Scotland followed his sister to the grave, and thus the king, while yet in the prime of manhood, was bereft of wife and children.

Anxious to secure the succession to his grand-daughter, who was called the Maiden of Norway, Alexander summoned a council or parliament at Scone, and those present bound themselves to accept the Norwegian princess as their sovereign, in the event of the king dying without issue. In the hope of obtaining a direct heir, Alexander took for a second wife Jolita, the daughter of the count of Dreux. The new queen was young and very beautiful, but the marriage was described as attended by evil omens, and the events which followed it might well assist the imagination of the chroniclers as to the portents they describe. Within a year afterwards Alexander was riding at nightfall from Kinghorn to Inverkeithen, on the shore of the Frith of Forth, when the horse starting or stumbling, rolled with him over a precipice. Thus died a prince whom the nation mourned as the last and worthiest of his line.

The first proceeding of the estates of Scotland was to fulfil their vow by appointing a regency to exercise the functions of government during the minority of the infant queen. But it was evident that the succession of the little Maiden of Norway was scarcely likely to be secured by such a measure. A female sovereign was new to the people, and the same prejudice existed against her, as in England had excluded from the throne the daughter of Henry I. It was therefore scarcely to be expected that the turbulent chiefs would preserve their allegiance to a child then in a foreign country, and partly of foreign extraction. It was not long before one strong party formed the design of placing its chief upon the throne to the exclusion of the Maiden of Norway. Robert de Brus, or Bruce, could show some relationship to the royal family, his mother Isabella being one of the daughters of David, earl of Huntingdon, brother of William the Lion. This chief, who was supported by many of the Scottish nobility, held a meeting of his adherents on the 20th of September, A.D. 1286. The scene of the assembly was Turnberry Castle, in Ayrshire, the seat of Bruce's son, Robert Bruce, who had received the title of Earl of Carrick, in right of his wife. An agreement was entered into, by which all the persons present bound themselves to adhere to one

* Matthew Paris.

another on all occasions, and against all persons, saving their allegiance to the king of England, and to him who should gain the kingdom of Scotland as the rightful heir of the late king. There appears little doubt that the real object of the meeting was to obtain the crown for Bruce, to which end they would have been willing to secure the assistance of Edward, by acknowledging him as feudal lord of Scotland. The English monarch, however, had other designs, which he proceeded to carry into effect.

Edward was the grand-uncle of the Maiden of Norway, and he, with her father Eric, might therefore be considered her natural guardians. The latter seems to have interested himself little about her fate; and neither paternal affection nor schemes of ambition prompted any active exertions in her cause. But with the English king the case was very different. Edward was one of the ablest and wisest monarchs of Europe, and at the same time the most powerful, ambitious, and unscrupulous. He had already secured to the foot of his throne the free people of Wales; and when the death of Alexander was made known, he perceived that the time was come when he might strike a powerful blow at the independence of Scotland. His first measures for this purpose seem to have been in themselves just and equitable, and to have been willingly accepted by the northern barons. He entered into a treaty with the chief nobles of the regency, and proposed an alliance between his son, the prince of Wales, and the Maiden of Norway. The agreement was finally concluded at Salisbury, July, A.D. 1290. Articles were drawn up for securing the independence of Scotland, and they were solemnly sworn to by the English king. It is matter for doubt how far such an oath would have been kept had the match taken place; for it is known that Edward had secured to his own party some of the Scottish chiefs, and under pretence of guarding the peace of the country, had obtained possession of many castles and fortified places. But the scheme of a union between the two kingdoms by marriage was defeated by the early death of the Maid of Norway, who, having set sail for Britain, fell sick during the passage, and, unable to pursue the voyage, landed on one of the Orkney islands, where she expired in her eighth year.

Edward was thus compelled either to resort to other measures for the purpose of adding Scotland to his dominions, or at once to relinquish his designs upon that country. It is probable that so ambitious a monarch did not long hesitate between the two alternatives; and the result of his deliberations was a communication to his council to the effect that he "had it in his mind to bring under his dominion the king and kingdom of Scotland in the same manner that he had subdued the kingdom of Wales." The pretext on which he founded his pretended right to interfere in the affairs of Scotland, was the claim which he advanced to be lord paramount of that country: a claim supported by his being in possession of the castles already alluded to, by virtue of the treaty of marriage between his son and the Maiden of Norway.

Such a claim as this was in the highest degree unjust. According to the feudal laws, to create a fief the superior must be in possession of territories which he bestows upon the vassal, and for which the vassal renders homage and services. But the kings of England had never held possession of Scotland, properly so called. That kingdom was the original seat of the Scots in the province of Argyle, extended by the conquest of the Picts to the northern shores of the Frith of Forth. The provinces thus conquered, and afterwards united together into the kingdom called Albania, and afterwards Scotland, were territories to which the English had never possessed, or claimed, any right, and lay beyond the northern wall, where the southern Britons had never been able to maintain a position. This condition of the territory of North Britain existed as early as the year 538, at which period there is not only no proof of the king of England having interfered with the disposition of the conquered lands; but it is matter for doubt whether there was then a king of England to make grants or receive homage.* It is necessary to make a distinction between the feudal suzerainty of Scotland and the right over certain territories which had formerly been part of the kingdom of England, and which, having been ceded to the Scots, were held by their princes as vassals of England to that extent. But the independence of the Scottish kingdom was no more affected by such homage than that of England was surrendered by the feudal service rendered to the king of France by the Plantagenets for their dominions on the Continent. The lands which the Scottish kings held by this tenure were parts of Cumberland and Northumberland. Frequent efforts had been made by the southern kings to change the homage due for these lands into a general homage for the kingdom of Scotland; but such attempts were always resisted, and, until the reign of William the Lion, no general acknowledgment of subjection was made.

The line of William the Lion having been abruptly cut off, the heir to the crown would be found among the descendants of David, earl of Huntingdon, his younger brother. The earl had one son and three daughters; the former died without issue, and of the latter, Margaret, the eldest, was married to Alan of Galloway; the second, Isabella, to Robert Bruce; and the third, Ada, to Henry Hastings. The eldest daughter bore no son to her husband, but her daughter, Dervorgoil, married John Baliol, of Bernard Castle. The issue of this marriage was a son, John Baliol. The Robert Bruce already named, who in right of his wife was earl of Carrick, was the son of Isabella, and John Hastings was the son of Ada. Between the rival claims of these nobles, there could, in our own day, be no difficulty in deciding; the laws of primogeniture clearly awarding the title to the descendant of the eldest branch. Such, indeed, was the generally recognised law at the time now referred to, but it was not so clearly settled as to preclude the possibility of dispute. When, therefore, the death of the young queen was known, it was doubtful how many claimants for the throne might present themselves, or how much of disorder and bloodshed might ensue before the title to the throne had been decided. The ambition of Edward, and the position he had assumed towards Scotland, excited the greatest apprehension among patriotic men, who saw misfortune and misrule about to succeed to the prosperity which the country had lately enjoyed.

There is some reason to believe that at this juncture the embassy to Edward, requesting his mediation, was sent by the Scottish council; the story of such an embassy, however, rests on no very good authority, and it may be doubted whether the northern barons would take a step which they

* Turner has shown that it is by no means certain whether Edgar ever was king over all England.—*History of the Anglo-Saxons*, vol. i. p. 441.

could not but see would be fraught with danger to the national independence. Whether as the result of the message alluded to, or as the initiative of the new negotiations, Edward requested the barons and the clergy of Scotland to meet him at Norham, a town on the English side of the Tweed. The summons was obeyed, and a conference took place on the 10th of May, A.D. 1291. Here Edward openly repeated the intention which he had already stated to his own barons, that he would dispose of the succession to the Scottish throne as lord paramount of that country, and he required that they should immediately

Edward I.

recognise his title and authority. It does not appear that the demand excited much surprise among the assembly, but they were not altogether unanimous in their assent, and a voice was heard to declare, that the request of the king could only be replied to when the Scottish throne had been filled. Edward swore by the saints that he would "vindicate his just rights, or perish in the attempt." The proceedings here terminated, and were renewed on the following day only to be farther adjourned to the 2nd of June. Edward then prepared for a warlike demonstration, by sending to his barons in the northern counties, and requiring them to attend at Norham on the 3rd of June, with horses and men as many as they could command.

The scene of the conference of the 2nd of June was a plain called Holywell Haugh, on the north bank of the Tweed, opposite Norham castle, and on Scottish ground. Among the assembly were eight persons who preferred a claim to the crown, Robert Bruce being at their head. To him Robert Burnell, the bishop of Bath and chancellor of England, put the question whether he acknowledged king Edward as lord paramount of Scotland? and whether he was willing to submit to his authority and receive judgment from him? It is related, and on unquestionable authority, that Bruce freely and openly declared his assent, and that the remaining seven competitors followed his example. On the following day John Baliol, a powerful chief, appeared, with another claimant of the title, and these two also assented to the demand.

It would appear that these proceedings had been in a great measure arranged beforehand. The two great claimants of the crown, Bruce and Baliol, had divided the greater part of the assembled barons into two factions, each being anxious, before all things, for the success of its chief, and ready to act implicitly under his directions. It was evi-

BALIOL DOING HOMAGE FOR THE CROWN OF SCOTLAND.

dent that if either of the two competitors submitted to the arbitration of Edward, the other had no resource but to follow his example, since the power of the English king would otherwise certainly turn the scale. The absence of Baliol on the first day of the meeting has not been satisfactorily accounted for, but it is probable that he hung back from being the first to assent to demands which implied the surrender of the national independence. If such was his motive, it proves not that he was more patriotic, but less brave than his opponents, since we find him ready, without remonstrance, to follow the example which he was unwilling to offer. Edward appears to have previously determined in favour of Baliol, whether in consequence of the justice of his claim, as the descendant of the eldest sister, or from other reasons, cannot be ascertained. In spite, however, of that determination, he assumed the appearance of long and anxious deliberation before his judgment was finally given.

The ambition of Edward was patient and far-seeing. He had no intention of limiting his authority over Scotland to the barren feudal superiority which he now claimed; but his ulterior designs were concealed, and suffered to remain in abeyance until a favourable opportunity should occur for carrying them into effect. Of those who may be called the minor claimants to the Scottish crown, nearly all seem to have been brought forward merely to increase the difficulty of the question, and possibly that, their secondary right having been established, any of them might be made use of at a future time, in case of need. The whole tenor of Edward's conduct, as well as his words, lead us to the conclusion that he intended to subjugate Scotland as he had already subjugated Wales, and that his present proceedings were merely the result of calculation, as necessary preliminaries to that end.

CHAPTER LIX.

Continuation of the Reign of Edward I.—Affairs of Scotland—Election of Baliol—Hostilities between the French and English—Edward's Policy towards Scotland—War between France and England—Baliol deprived of the Functions of Government—War declared by the Scottish Parliament—The Massacre of Berwick—Campaign of Edward in Scotland—William Wallace—The Battle of Stirling.

The immediate result of the conference at Norham was the appointment of a number of commissioners, whose nominal duty it was to deliberate upon the question of the succession, and to examine the claims of the several competitors. On the 11th of June Edward was formally placed in possession of the Scottish kingdom, the regents relinquishing their authority in his favour, and the governors of the castles surrendering their trusts into his hands, with the reservation that within two months after the determination of the succession they should be restored to the sovereign who might be chosen.

Among the Scottish nobles there appears to have been but one who, during this period of national apathy, acted with spirit and patriotism. While his compeers bent tamely before the foreign yoke, the earl of Angus, Gilbert of Umfraville, custodian of the castles of Dundee and Forfar, refused to deliver those fortresses without an undertaking from Edward and the whole of the competitors to indemnify him for the act. The king considered it politic to comply with these conditions, the only instance in which he had met with opposition to his will. Robert Bruce, Baliol, and many of the Scottish chiefs, took the oath of homage to Edward on the 15th of June, and immediately afterwards the peace of the king of England, as lord paramount of Scotland, was proclaimed throughout the country.

The commissioners chosen at Norham proceeded to Berwick, and there, on the 3rd of August, met in council, in the king's presence. The number of candidates, increased by Edward's secret intrigues, now reached to twelve, and one more was afterwards added, in the person of king Eric of Norway. The enlarged list of claimants rendered the choice still more uncertain; but, before the time came for the decision, the right of the descendants of the earl of Huntingdon was clearly shown, and the rest of the competitors withdrew from the contest. A year elapsed before the cause was finally decided. On the 15th of October, A.D. 1292, a parliament held at Berwick declared in favour of the elder branch of the earl's family. The commissioners, who had failed to come to an agreement on this point, had previously resigned their functions. Another meeting was held in November, at which Edward declared his intention more plainly; and at length, on the 17th of that month, the king gave his award at Berwick Castle in favour of John de Baliol. On doing so he declared, as he had previously done at Norham, that the election of a king for Scotland should not in any way affect Edward's property in the country; thus reserving to himself still a territorial right in that kingdom. The seal of the Scottish regents was broken into four pieces, and placed in the treasury of Edward, in token of the pretended subjection of Scotland. On the 30th of November Baliol was crowned at Scone, and on the 26th of December he appeared before Edward at Newcastle, and took the oath of homage to him. It will be necessary here to suspend our narrative of Scottish affairs, for the purpose of following the course of events in England.

The persecutions of the Jews, which had taken place at the beginning of the reign of Edward, had little power to check the increase or destroy the prosperity of that extraordinary people. Having no country; living among strangers and enemies; deprived of all political standing—of all legitimate objects of ambition, even of reasonable security, for his life—the Jew devoted those intellectual qualities, in which he was seldom deficient, to the pursuit of the one agent of power within his reach. Wealth alone could raise him from a condition of utter misery and contempt, give him a certain standing and importance among his fellow-men, and offer employment for his energies. If the favour of the law was to be bought, the wealthy Jew might hope to buy it, while for the poor there was no mercy. If he was derided and persecuted by the haughty sons of a happier race, he returned scorn for scorn, and revenged himself where he could by trading upon their necessities. If he became grovelling and avaricious, absorbed in a mean and unworthy passion, perhaps the fault should be ascribed less to him than to those whose unconquerable prejudices isolated him in the midst of his kind, and condemned him to the fate of Ishmael.

Thirteen years had passed since three hundred men and women of the despised race had been hanged in the streets of London, when Edward found himself again in want of money; and this time he put in force a measure even more arbitrary, and more in defiance of all law and justice, than

before. He ordered that every Jew in England, young or old, male or female, should be seized on an appointed day, and cast into the dungeons of his castles. Here they were confined until they had paid collectively a sum of £12,000 to the royal treasury. Not long afterwards further measures were taken against them, and this time, as it appeared, rather from a spirit of fanatical cruelty than for the sake of gain. In the year 1290 the king issued a proclamation, commanding all the Jews to quit the country within two months, under the penalty of death. In spite of the cruelties they had suffered, their numbers had rather increased than diminished, and more than 16,000 persons were thus banished from the kingdom. They were permitted to carry with them only so much money as would pay the cost of their voyage, the rest of their goods and property being seized in the king's name. There is no doubt that large sums of money were thus obtained by the crown, and it may at first appear that such was the object of the king in directing this wholesale banishment. If so, it was certainly a short-sighted policy, inasmuch as the supplies which repeated exactions had continued to force from the Jews would now be permanently cut off.

The mariners of the king's fleet proved ready agents of his tyrannous commands, and perceiving how little apparent prospect the Jews could have of redress for any injuries inflicted on them, the sailors in many cases stole the little money which the proscribed people possessed, and even drowned a number of them during the passage. The murderers, however, did not entirely escape punishment, for the king was by no means desirous that the royal example of plundering and slaying should be followed by his subjects. Some of the sailors were arraigned, and suffered death as the punishment of their misdeeds.

It is remarkable that, at the very time of these shameful proceedings against the Jews, the king was engaged in enacting various admirable laws for the protection of his Christian subjects, and the reforms thus instituted were immediately put in force. Perversion of justice again prevailed throughout the kingdom, insomuch that a few years later, when all the judges were indicted for bribery, only two of the whole number were pronounced innocent. We may reasonably hope, however, that the corruption in the administration of the law was not so general as would appear from these facts. The judges were compelled to pay heavy fines as the result of their condemnation, and when such was the case, and the king in want of money, it might probably have been difficult for any of the accused to prove their innocence. Other measures taken by the king for increasing his revenues proved less successful. Proceedings were instituted for the recovery of portions of the royal domains, of which some of the barons had become possessed, and these nobles were required to show the titles by which they held their lands; but the demand excited such a determined resistance and such strong feelings of indignation, that the king was compelled to desist. It is related that when the royal commissioners presented themselves to earl Warenne, and required to see the titles of his estates, the earl unsheathed his sword, and stretched it out before them. "This," said he, "is the instrument by which I hold my lands, and by it I mean to defend them! Our ancestors, who came to this realm with William the Bastard, obtained their possessions by their good swords. The conquest was not made by him alone, nor for himself solely; our fathers bore their part, and were participants with him." Such language was not to be mistaken, and Edward found it prudent to leave the great barons alone, confining himself to the seizure of a few estates from men whose weakness or whose known character offered less likelihood of resistance.

The recent successes of the English king necessarily excited attention and considerable alarm on the Continent. For a long time past the power of England had been increasing year by year, and the conquest of Wales and Scotland, which seemed to involve the union of the whole island under one ruler, made that power still further to be dreaded. Everything might be feared from a man of the character of Edward—ambitious, daring, and unscrupulous, and with the whole force of Britain at his command.

The animosity between the French and English kings seldom slept long, and on former occasions, when the Welsh or the Scots had been in arms against the king of England, they had received secretly either aid or encouragement from France. Now, however, Philip, surnamed Le Bel, the reigning monarch of that country, adopted a different policy; and, without attempting to revive the fainting patriotism of the Scottish nobles, he determined to avail himself of the moment when Edward was engaged in the north to attack the English territories on the Continent. Edward, however, was not unprepared for these hostile demonstrations; and, while directing his arms in other quarters, he had not neglected, by all those arts familiar to the state policy of the time, to protect himself against the probable designs of the French monarch. The count of Savoy, one of the most powerful vassals of France, had been won to the side of Edward by gifts and promises, and similar means had secured the goodwill of the emperor of Germany. Edward also allied himself with the count of Bar by giving him his daughter Margaret in marriage. Other measures are said to have been employed by him; and the disaffection of a number of the subjects of Philip is referred by French writers to the influence of the king of England.

Such was the position of affairs when a matter, apparently of the least possible importance, led to an outbreak of hostilities between the countries. A number of English and Norman sailors met together at a watering-place near to Bayonne, and a quarrel took place as to which party should fill their casks first. One of the English sailors struck a Norman with his fist; the Norman drew a knife and attempted to stab his assailant, who immediately closed with him, and in the scuffle the Norman was killed. The Englishman was carried out of danger by his shipmates; and when the Normans demanded satisfaction for the injury, the authorities of Bayonne, which city was in possession of the English, are said to have refused the request. The Normans, baffled in their vengeance, put to sea; and having met with a small vessel belonging to the English, they took possession of it. There was on board a merchant of Bayonne, and him they hung up to the yard-arm with a dog tied to his feet.

Such a proceeding was necessarily followed by retaliation on the part of the English, and the Normans were made to pay dearly for the savage act they had committed. The mariners of the cinque ports attacked them continually in the channel, and every Norman who fell into their hands was butchered. Before long the sailors of other nations began to take part in this irregular warfare, the

French and the Genoese taking the side of the Normans, and the mariners of Ireland and Holland ranking themselves on the side of the English. Many bloody encounters took place between the opposite parties, without any interference from their governments, the latter remaining passive spectators of these proceedings. The Normans having collected a fleet of about 200 vessels, of different sizes, made a descent upon the coast of Gascony, hung a number of sailors whom they took prisoners, and carried off large quantities of stores, with which they returned to St. Mahe in Brittany. No sooner were they safely at anchor than an English fleet appeared at the mouth of the harbour. The sailors of the cinque ports, with only about eighty ships, had set out to meet the enemy. The Normans accepted the challenge to decide the matter by a pitched battle, which was fought, by mutual agreement, at a spot on the coast. The result of the battle was decisive in favour of the English, who took the Norman ships and massacred all on board, no quarter being given in any case. The two nations might thus be said to be at war for some time before their rulers took any part in the matter. The result of this battle was to excite to the utmost the vindictive feelings of the French and their desire for vengeance. Philip, who was himself enraged at the result of the engagement, perceived that the time was come when the people would hail with delight the declaration of war with England, and when such a war might be undertaken with the best chance of success.

Philip assumed the right to punish the English king, who, as duke of Aquitaine, might be said to be a vassal of the French crown. Officers sent by Philip attempted to seize some of the English lands, but they were driven back by the troops in possession. He then summoned the "duke of Aquitaine" to appear before his suzerain after the feast of Christmas. Edward considered it prudent not wholly to disregard this summons, and he sent his brother Edmund to arrange terms with Philip. On this occasion it would appear that Edward, influenced by the ties of blood, made choice of a bad instrument. The negotiation terminated by an agreement on the part of Edmund to surrender Gascony to the French king for a period of forty days as a satisfaction for his wounded honour, receiving the promise of Philip that it should be faithfully given up at the expiration of that time.

The French king now declared himself satisfied; but when the forty days were over, and Edward demanded restitution of Gascony, he received the refusal which was to be anticipated. Philip now assumed a bolder front, declared that Edward had not fulfilled the duties of a vassal, and summoned him once more as duke of Aquitaine to appear before his peers. The summons being disregarded, he declared him contumacious, and condemned him to the loss of all his estates in France. This declaration was immediately followed by active measures, while Edward, on his part, prepared for war with all his customary energy. He formally renounced his vassalage to the French crown, and assembled a powerful fleet at Portsmouth. For several weeks the winds were contrary, and during that time the impatient monarch was compelled to remain in a condition of inactivity.

Meanwhile the Welsh, who probably were incited by Philip, broke out into insurrection, took possession of many castles and towns on their borders, and slaughtered great numbers of the English. Edward immediately led the greater part of his army into Wales, having first sent a body of troops into Gascony, and commanded his powerful fleet to attack and plunder the French coast. A number of sanguinary sea-fights took place between the French and English, and in nearly every instance the French were defeated, with heavy loss.

The campaign of Edward in Wales was by no means brief or unattended with danger. The mountaineers once more distinguished themselves by an obstinate resistance, and the rigours of winter approached to add to the privations and difficulties of the royal troops. Several months passed away before the Welsh were again reduced to submission. Madoc, their leader, the foremost and the best man in this new struggle for liberty, was at length compelled to surrender, and he, with other of the most dangerous chiefs, were cast into dungeons for life. And thus, after the country had been again ravaged, and the homes of great numbers of the people lay in ashes, the rebellion was quelled. The story which has long been current respecting the hanging of the Welsh bards by Edward, rests on no contemporary authority, and therefore must be rejected as devoid of truth. There is no question that the king was capable of that, or any other savage act by which vengeance for the past or advantage for the future was to be obtained; but it is the business of history to illustrate a man's character by his actions, and not to deduce from that character a confirmation of doubtful statements.

No sooner was the submission of the Welsh complete than the position of affairs in Scotland again demanded Edward's presence, and compelled him to relinquish his intention of crossing the channel in person. The nobles of Guienne had lately declared themselves in his favour, and thither the king despatched a small body of troops under the command of his brother Edmund. Soon after landing Edmund died, and the command fell upon the earl of Lincoln, who attacked the French towns and fortresses with success, driving out the whole of the French garrisons. This state of things, however, was soon afterwards reversed. The towns were retaken by the forces of Philip, and his uncle, the count d'Artois, at the head of a well-appointed and numerous army, defeated the English in several engagements, and ultimately drove them out of the country, with the exception of a few towns on the coast. Reprisals took place, and the whole sea-board of Brittany was plundered by the English fleet, which inflicted great damage upon the inhabitants, and punished them with an indiscriminating cruelty. The French, with their allies, made similar attempts on this side of the channel; and on one occasion they landed at Dover, and sacked the town while the male inhabitants were absent. The men of Dover returned to find many of their wives and children murdered, and they overtook the marauders before they could reach their ships, and slew several hundreds of them.

The policy of Edward towards Scotland had been insulting and imperious to a degree which can hardly be considered judicious. The king whom he had raised to the throne was thwarted in every assumption of independent sovereignty, and was made to feel that his oath of vassalage was no form, but a galling and bitter reality. Complaints against the government of Baliol were never wanting from his disaffected subjects, and these readily obtained the ear of

Edward, who lost no opportunity of summoning the Scottish king to appear before him and answer the charge of mal-administration. It appears that when Baliol submitted to these demands, and presented himself in the English courts, Edward treated him with consideration; but when the Scottish monarch attempted to assert his independence, he was checked by measures of the utmost rigour. The submission of Baliol to his imperious master was complete, and although he at length was goaded to offer some resistance, this tardy show of spirit tends little to redeem his character from the unfavourable light in which it is viewed by history. Apologists for this degraded king have not been wanting, and have attempted to paint him as a man possessed of lofty qualities, who erred rather from over-estimating his strength than from weakness or pusillanimity. His contemporaries among his own countrymen thought otherwise, and gave him a nickname, attributing to him an utter want of energy and ability. Posterity has generally concurred in that opinion, and the name of John Baliol has been inscribed on the least honourable page of Scottish history.

While proceedings were pending against Baliol for the resistance which he had at length displayed, Philip of France seized upon the province of Guienne, and war was declared between France and England. Edward now summoned Baliol and the chiefs of the Scottish nobility to render him assistance against his enemies, and to attend him with their armed vassals. But the insolent and overbearing policy which he had lately exhibited had roused the national pride of the Scots. They paid no regard to his summons, and, instead of arming their vassals in his service, they assembled a parliament at Scone. The parliament commenced its proceedings by dismissing all Englishmen from the Scottish court; and, being thus relieved from the presence of spies on their measures, they determined to declare war against Edward and to enter into negotiations with the French king, which resulted in a treaty of alliance. The English barons who held estates in Scotland were banished from their lands, and the few Scottish nobles who still remained faithful to Edward were proceeded against in the same manner. Among these was Robert Bruce, lord of Annandale, whose broad lands were thus temporarily lost to him, and were given to John Comyn, earl of Buchan.

Such proceedings as these excited the indignation of Edward, who sought for the instrument through whom he might counteract their tendencies. Such an instrument appeared in the younger Bruce, son of the competitor for the crown, to whom Edward now showed great favour, regretting his decision in favour of Baliol, and expressing his determination to place Bruce on the throne. In consequence of these promises, Bruce and his son, with other nobles of their party, renewed the oath of homage to the English king. The weak and vacillating character of Baliol was clearly displayed at this critical moment. He made little or no attempt to quell the rising storm; and the dominant party in the Scottish parliament, fearing a submission on his part, excluded him from the functions of government, confined him in a mountain fortress, and placed the management of affairs in the hands of twelve of the leading nobles. The council began the exercise of authority with bold and patriotic measures. They formally threw off their allegiance to Edward, concluded a treaty of marriage between the eldest son of Baliol and the niece of Philip of France, and finally assembled an army, with which they marched against Carlisle. The attack upon that city proved unsuccessful, and the Scottish army was split up into factions, whom the bond of a common love for liberty with difficulty held together.

Edward had now prepared himself for the signal vengeance which he meditated. He collected an army of 30,000 foot and 4,000 horse, and was presently joined by 1,000 foot and 500 horse under the command of Anthony Beck, bishop of Durham. This warlike prelate rode beside the king at the head of the troops, and with the sacred standards of St. John of Beverley and St. Cuthbert of Durham elevated above them, they marched towards Scotland. Baliol had been already summoned to attend at Newcastle as vassal of the English crown. Edward waited a few days for his appearance, and then crossed the Tweed and led his army along the Scottish side to the town of Berwick, which was then in the hands of the Scots.

Berwick was at that time a place of great importance, celebrated for its wealth and the power of its merchants, and thus its capture offered to Edward other temptations than the prospect of revenge. He, however, made some show of clemency by proposing terms of accommodation. These being refused, a simultaneous attack was made upon the town by the English fleet and the troops of the king. The attack by sea was repulsed, with the loss of three ships, which were burnt by the townspeople; but the onslaught of the land forces bore down all opposition. Berwick possessed a castle of great strength, but the town itself was defended only by a dike. Over this outwork Edward led his troops in person, and, mounted on his warhorse, was the first to enter the town. The example stimulated the courage of his soldiery, and within a short time the town was in their hands.

The scene that ensued was characterised by deeds of horror which are a deep reproach to the manhood of the age, and an indelible stain upon the memory of him who directed them. Seventeen thousand persons were put to the sword, without distinction of age or sex. The young and the innocent, the aged and the helpless, were mingled in the same slaughter with the strong man who resisted to the death. For two days the carnage was continued, until the dead were piled up before the doors of the houses, and the streets ran down with blood. From the cruelty of man the wretched inhabitants sought the protection of God, and, flocking to the churches, they flung themselves in terror before the altars. But the sanctuary was speedily violated by their enemies; the shelter of the sacred walls availed them nothing, and they were cut down by hundreds where they knelt. It is related that a party of Flemish merchants defended themselves in their factory—a building of great strength—against the whole English army, until the assailants, exasperated by the opposition they encountered, set fire to the factory, and burnt it, with its brave defenders, to the ground.

Such was the terrible lesson which Edward was capable of giving to those who opposed him. The massacre of Berwick took place on Good Friday, the 30th of March, A.D. 1296, and on the 5th of April the abbot of Arbroath arrived at the town, attended by three monks. Undismayed by the ruthless character of the king, the abbot appeared before him, and delivered to him Baliol's formal

renunciation of his homage. "What! is the traitor capable of such madness?" the king exclaimed. "If, then, he will not come to us, we will go to him."

The injury which the Scots had sustained excited the deepest feelings of indignation throughout the country. Eager for vengeance, the Scottish army, headed by the earls of Ross, Monteith, and Atholl, entered England and ravaged Redesdale and Tynedale, and put the inhabitants of all ranks and ages to the sword. Towns, villages, and monasteries were burnt to the ground, and a war of extermination continued for awhile on both sides. But the vengeance of the Scots was short-lived, while that of Edward, deeply planned and unrelenting, was far more terrible and lasting.

Earl Warenne displaying his Title to his Estates. (See page 315.)

The castle of Dunbar was one of the strongest and most important fortresses of Scotland. Patrick, earl of Dunbar, was at this time fighting against his countrymen in the English army; but his countess, who held the castle, and whose hatred of the English was intense, entered into a treaty with the Scottish leaders to deliver it up to them. The offer was speedily taken advantage of, and the earls of Ross, Atholl, and Monteith, with other powerful chiefs, and a body of thirty-one knights and a number of foot, took possession of the castle. Having driven out the few soldiers who refused to join their standard, they prepared to maintain, at all hazards, the strong position they had obtained.

Aware of the importance of this movement, Edward dispatched the earl Warenne with 10,000 foot and 1,000 horse to recover the castle. When the earl summoned the garrison to surrender, they agreed to do so, provided they were not relieved within three days. Meanwhile, the whole Scottish army was advancing upon the English, and having

EDWARD I. AT BERWICK. (See page 317.

reached the high ground above Dunbar, took up a strong position there. Forty thousand foot and 1,500 horse were ranged in formidable array upon the hills, and the garrison of the castle jeered and insulted the English from the walls, as though they were already beaten. The relative positions and numbers of the two armies were such that nothing but the headlong precipitancy of the Scots could have lost them the victory. Undismayed by the number of the enemy, earl Warenne advanced to meet them, and while passing through a narrow valley his troops fell for a short time into confusion. The Scots perceived this, and believing that the English were taking to flight, they abandoned their position, and rushed down upon their foes with shouts of triumph. Meanwhile the English leader had restored order among his troops, and the Scots found themselves, not among masses of fugitives, but face to face with a compact body of tried and well-appointed soldiers. They were driven back in the greatest disorder, and the earl gained a complete victory, which for a time decided the fate of Scotland. Ten thousand men were left dead on the field, and the greater number of the leaders were taken prisoners. This battle was fought on the 28th of April, and on the following day king Edward appeared on the scene in person, and the castle then surrendered.

Edward proceeded with his customary energy to complete the subjugation of the kingdom. He passed through the country and took possession of the castles of Roxburgh, Dumbarton, and Jedburgh. Having received reinforcements he advanced to Edinburgh, which fortress surrendered to him after a siege of eight days. At Stirling he was joined by the earl of Ulster, with 30,000 men, and passed on to Perth, where for a few days he sheathed the sword and occupied himself with the ceremonies of religion. While the English army were keeping the feast of John the Baptist, new messengers arrived from Baliol, who now sued for peace. Edward would not condescend to treat with the fallen monarch in person, but sent to him the bishop of Durham, who communicated to him the pleasure of the English king. The terms offered were such as never ought to have been accepted. Baliol was required to submit himself absolutely to the mercy of the conqueror, and to renounce his kingly state under circumstances of the utmost humiliation. In the presence of an assembly of bishops and nobles the king of Scotland was stripped of crown and sceptre, and was compelled, with a white rod in his hand, to perform a feudal penance. The date of this disgraceful transaction was the 7th of July, A.D. 1296, and the scene, according to the statements of historians, as well as the details of local tradition, was the churchyard of Strathkathro, in Angus. Baliol placed his son Edward in the king's hands as a hostage, and the youth, with his father, was sent to England, where both remained for three years, imprisoned in the Tower.

Edward continued his victorious course through Scotland, encountering no opposition. From Perth he proceeded by way of Aberdeen to Elgin. On his return to Berwick he visited the ancient abbey of Scone, and removed from it the "famous and fatal stone" upon which for ages past the Scottish kings had been crowned. This stone, with the regalia of Scotland, was placed by Edward in Westminster Cathedral as a memorial of the conquest of Scotland. Within a year that conquest had been entirely wrested from him; but the stone still remains at Westminster, little worn by the lapse of six centuries.

Ater the battle of Dunbar, Bruce, the earl of Carrick, reminded Edward of his promise to place him on the Scottish throne. The king—who fulfilled his promises only when it suited him—replied angrily, "Have I nothing to do but to conquer kingdoms for thee?" Instead of placing Bruce on the throne, Edward directed him, with his son, the younger Bruce, to receive to the king's peace the inhabitants of his own estate of Carrick and Annandale. Such was the degrading office in which the young Robert Bruce, the future restorer of his country's freedom, was at this time employed.

Edward now occupied himself in a settlement of the affairs of the kingdom; and the measures which he took for that purpose were in themselves politic and just. The forfeited estates of the clergy were restored, many of the civil functionaries of Baliol retained in office, and the governors of districts in most cases permitted to exercise authority as before. Some Englishmen were, however, placed in command of castles and districts to the south, and the supreme authority was vested in three persons—John de Warenne, earl of Surrey, governor; Hugh de Cressingham, treasurer; and William Ormesby, justiciary.

The independence of Scotland now appeared completely destroyed, the great nobles reduced to a state of submission, if not of servility, and the power of the king of England firmly seated throughout the country. But a change was at hand, and the slumbering fires of patriotism were soon to be kindled into a blaze from east to west. The man who was destined to rouse his countrymen from their apathy, and work out the freedom of his native land, was at this time engaged in roaming the hills of Renfrewshire, at the head of a petty band of marauders. He was that Sir William Wallace, famed through succeeding ages in song and story, but of whom history can offer few details worthy of reliance. The family of Wallace was ancient, and might be termed gentle, but was neither rich nor noble. He was the son of Sir Malcolm Wallace, of Ellerslie, in Renfrewshire. In those stormy times bodily strength and valour in the field were the first qualities necessary to success. The strength of Wallace is described as having been prodigious. His size was gigantic, and as he grew towards manhood there were few men who could meet him in single combat. He was a man of violent passions, and a strong hatred of the English, which was evinced by him early in life, was fostered by those with whom he came in contact.

When Edward returned to England he received few of the congratulations which usually meet the returning conqueror, and on the contrary he perceived lowering faces and a general expression of discontent among the nobles and the people. The immense expenses incurred by the repeated wars of the king had impoverished the country, and when Edward demanded fresh supplies for the campaign in France, the barons demurred, and many of them quitted the parliament with their retainers.

This state of things encouraged the Scots to take up arms once more. The great chiefs, indeed, hung back from the movement, and maintained their condition of supineness and inactivity, but the inferior nobility and the people no longer suffered themselves to be restrained. Incited by their hatred of the English, the peasants formed

themselves into armed bands, which infested the highways and attacked any of their enemies whom they could surprise in detached parties. Edward devoted large sums of money to repressing these disorders, but without success; and now there appeared on the scene the extraordinary individual whose energies, first excited by personal injuries, were afterwards devoted to his country, with efforts not less than heroic.

We first read of Wallace as engaged in a quarrel in the town of Lanark with some English officers who had insulted him. Bloodshed ensued, and he would probably have lost his life in the streets, but for the interference of his mistress to whose house he fled, and with whose assistance he escaped. It is stated that Hislop, the English sheriff, attacked the house, and, in a spirit of brutal and unmanly vengeance, seized the unhappy lady and put her to death. Wallace having heard the news, threw himself upon the sheriff and slew him. For this deed he was proclaimed a traitor, and banished from his home to seek a retreat among the mountain fastnesses. Here he was soon joined by a few desperate men who naturally acknowledged the strongest as their chief, and who, under his guidance, made successful attacks upon straggling parties of English. His name soon became famous, and numbers of men of different classes flocked to his standard. The halo of romance with which this hero was speedily invested by the people, the continued and galling acts of tyranny on the part of the English, and the desire of revenge, all tended to recruit the ranks of the mountain chieftain. Among the first men of note who joined him was Sir William Douglas, the former commander of the garrison of Berwick, who at the sacking of that town had been permitted to march out with military honours. He now brought a force consisting of the whole of his vassals to the army of Wallace. At this time Ormesby, the justiciary, was holding court at Scone. Thither Wallace led his troops and surprised the justiciary, who escaped with difficulty, leaving a rich booty behind him.

The Scots now openly ravaged the country, plundering and slaying all the English that fell into their power. Wallace was cruel and merciless in war, and through the records of that time we look in vain for any of those acts of humanity which were inculcated by the laws of chivalry, and occasionally practised by men who sought the reputation of accomplished knights. The same ruthless barbarity characterised the mode of warfare on either side, and Scots or English, in passing through the country, marked their course by a trail of blood.

The conduct of the younger Bruce, who afterwards, as Robert I., displayed such distinguished abilities, was at this time uncertain, and the reverse of energetic. Edward, however, dreaded the rebellion of a chief who possessed such great estates and influence, and, having summoned him to Carlisle, compelled him to make oath, on the sword of Thomas à Becket, that he would continue faithful. As a proof of his fidelity, he was required to ravage the lands of Sir William Douglas, whose wife and children he seized and carried into Annandale. Having thus quelled suspicion, the young chief, who was then twenty-two years old, called together his father's vassals, spoke of his recent oath as having been extorted by force, and therefore of no weight, and urged them to follow him against the oppressors of their country. They refused to do so in the absence of his father, and Bruce then collected his own retainers, and proceeded to join Wallace.

The news of the rising of the Scots was brought to Edward as he was about to embark for Flanders. He immediately issued orders for the collecting of an army, which was placed under the command of Sir Henry Percy and Sir Robert Clifford. These distinguished commanders advanced, at the head of 40,000 men, to meet the forces of the patriots, which were already in a condition of disorganisation. The Scots were without any acknowledged leader, and although Wallace, as the prime mover of the revolt, as well as by his superior qualities, was the most worthy to assume that position, the higher nobility who were with him refused to act under the orders of a man whom they regarded as their inferior. Under such circumstances as these, combined movements were impossible, and all the advantages of discipline, which, equally with prudence, may be said to be the better part of valour, were on the side of the enemy. The English leaders proposed to negociate, and, after a short deliberation, the chief associates of Wallace laid down their arms, and once more gave their submission to Edward. Among those who did so were Bruce, Sir William Douglas, the steward of Scotland, the bishop of Glasgow, Sir Alexander Lindesay, and Sir Richard Lundin. The document signed by them is dated at Irvine, on the 9th of July. One man alone, of all the higher Scottish nobility, remained to uphold the honour of his order, and preserved his duty to his country. This was Sir Andrew Moray of Bothwell. Undaunted by the disaffection of his powerful companions, Wallace still held together a strong band of men, who, poorer and more patriotic, disapproved the pusillanimity of their chiefs, and with these he retreated for a time into the mountains.

Several months elapsed, during which Edward appears to have made no attempt to molest the Scottish insurgents. Meanwhile the fame of Wallace was extended throughout the country, and vast numbers of the people flocked to his standard. Knighton, an old English historian, asserts that the whole of the lower orders already regarded Wallace as the future deliverer of their country, and that they gathered new hope and courage amidst the surrounding dangers from the undaunted brow he bore. It is stated, also, that many of the nobility repented of oaths weakly or unwillingly taken, and their hearts were with the cause of the man whom they had refused to obey. Wallace renewed offensive operations with greatly increased forces, and drove the English from the castles of Brechin, Forfar, Montrose, and other fortresses, to the north of the Forth. He was engaged in a siege of the castle of Dundee when he received news of the advance of the English. Raising the siege, he marched his forces, consisting of 40,000 men, in haste to Stirling, where he arrived before the English army. Wallace took up a favourable position on the banks of the Forth, a portion of his troops being concealed by the hills. The earl of Surrey, in command of 50,000 foot and 1,000 horse, soon afterwards appeared on the other side of the river. On observing the strong position of Wallace the earl thought it prudent to negotiate with him, and to this end sent messengers to him proposing to treat. The reply of Wallace was bold and decided. "Return," he said, "to those who sent you, and say that we are not here to waste words, but to maintain our rights and give free-

dom to Scotland; let them advance, and we will meet them beard to beard."

The English were exasperated by this menace, and importuned their leader to accept the challenge offered to him. Cressingham, the treasurer, a weak and hot-tempered man, joined his expostulations with the others, protesting against a delay which would increase the expenditure of the public money. The earl, though an able general, who must have perceived the danger of an attack against the position before him, was prevailed upon by such representations as these to yield his own better judgment, and lead his impatient troops to the destruction which awaited them.

Early on the morning of the 11th September the English began their passage across the narrow wooden bridge which was the only means of communication with the opposite bank of the river. It is evident that a large force would occupy many hours in crossing the river by this means, and during that time they must lie in a great measure at the mercy of a determined enemy. Wallace did not neglect the opportunity thus afforded him. He suffered the English to transport about one-half of their forces, and then took possession of one end of the bridge, thus effectually cutting off their further advance. He then surrounded the body of the enemy who were thus separated, threw them into confusion, and gained a bloody victory. Many thousands of the English fell by the sword or perished in the water, and among the dead was the treasurer Cressingham. This man during his administration had made himself peculiarly obnoxious to the Scottish people, and they now revenged themselves after a barbarous fashion, by stripping the skin from the dead body of their enemy, and cutting it into small pieces to be worn as the North American Indian of our day carries the scalp of his fallen foe.

The earl of Surrey had not crossed the river, and as soon as he perceived that the destruction of his troops was inevitable, he caused as many of them as could be collected to occupy the castle of Stirling, and then took horse and rode at full speed to Berwick. Among the Scots the loss was comparatively small, and the only man of note who fell was the patriotic Sir Andrew Moray of Bothwell. The result of this victory was no less than the restoration of the country to freedom. Wallace pushed his success without delay, and wherever he went his progress was almost without opposition. The castles of Edinburgh, Berwick, Dundee, and Roxburgh at once surrendered, and within a short time the rest of the Scottish strongholds submitted to the victor; so that there was not a fortress in the country remaining in the possession of the English king.

A few months later a famine arose in Scotland, and, driven in some measure by the want of supplies, Wallace invaded England. He remained for awhile in Cumberland, and on his return an assembly of the nobility was held at the Forest Kirk in Selkirkshire. It is generally understood to have been at this time that Wallace was invested with the title of guardian or governor of the kingdom of Scotland and commander of its army.

It is worthy of remark that the name of Baliol was retained in this instrument, and the appointment of Wallace was declared to be made with the authority of king John, whose legitimate right to the crown appears to have been universally recognised.

At this time Edward was still in Flanders, engaged in a war with Philip of France, which had followed the seizure of Guienne. A treaty of peace having been at length agreed to, Philip endeavoured to influence Edward in favour of the Scots, and to include them also in the amnesty. But the English king would listen to no such proposals. His conquest had been suddenly wrested from him, and he was intent on vengeance. He issued letters to the barons of the kingdom, commanding that the whole military force of the realm should be assembled at York on the 14th of January, A.D. 1298.

The immense army thus collected together, and numbering 100,000 foot and 4,000 horse, was placed under the earl of Surrey, who led it as far as Berwick. On his arrival there the earl received the king's direction not to proceed until he himself should be there to take the command.

Edward landed in England in March, and again summoned the barons, with all the forces at their command, to meet him at York at the approaching Feast of Pentecost. A still more numerous army than before was thus organised, and the king placed himself at its head, and marched triumphantly towards the north. Having reached Roxburgh, he proceeded thence along the coast, attended by a fleet which had been despatched to furnish the army with supplies. During this part of his course he encountered no opposition, saw no enemy, and the few habitations which were to be found along the route had been deserted by their inhabitants.

The Scottish patriots were gathered together among the mountains, and the great and noble of the land once more ranged themselves beneath the standard of Wallace. Among them was Robert Bruce, who now finally declared himself on the side of freedom. With a cool judgment, which merited a more fortunate issue, Wallace for a time avoided coming into collision with the enemy, whose overwhelming numbers threatened to crush him in an open conflict. He hung upon the flank of the English army, unseen, but close at hand, ready to take advantage of any opportunity of inflicting damage upon it. The march of Edward was not unattended with difficulties. The scanty resources of the country were wholly insufficient to afford sustenance for his troops, and the store ships were detained and driven about by contrary winds. A quarrel also took place between the English and the Welsh soldiers under his command; and the latter, to the number of 40,000, showed a disposition to desert and go over to the Scots. This cruel and unprincipled king possessed at least the quality of a high-souled courage; and when the probable desertion of so large a portion of his army was reported to him, he is said to have treated the matter with disdain. "Let my enemies," he said, "go and join my enemies. One day I will chastise them all." Meanwhile the ships still failed to arrive, and the scarcity of provisions seemed likely to approach a famine. Edward was about to retreat to Edinburgh when he learned that the Scottish army was encamped not far off in the wood of Falkirk. The news is said to have been brought to the king privately by two of the Scottish nobles, the earls of Dunbar and Angus. He immediately determined to go forth to meet the insurgents, and on that night the royal army lay in the fields. Edward himself, sleeping beside his horse, received a kick from the animal, which broke two of his ribs. The news soon spread through the camp that the king had been killed, and

a state of confusion ensued which threatened the complete demoralisation of the troops. Edward, however, restored discipline among them by mounting his horse and riding at their head, regardless of the pain he endured.

The English army began its march at dawn on the 22nd of July, A.D. 1298. Within a short time the enemy were observed to have taken up a position in a field which lay at the side of some rising ground in the neighbourhood of Falkirk. The force under the command of Wallace was greatly inferior to that opposed to him, but he had posted his troops with great judgment, and for a long time the Scottish infantry repelled the furious attacks directed against them. Not so the cavalry, of whom Wallace possessed no more than 1,000. These did not even attempt to resist the superior numbers of the enemy, but, without striking a blow, they turned and fled from the field. Cowardice is certainly not the characteristic of the race to which these men belonged, and therefore their flight can only be attributed to treason on the part of their leaders. Be the cause what it might, the loss of this division speedily decided the fate of the day, and the heroic resistance of the infantry was rendered totally unavailing. The Scots at length gave way before the repeated charges of heavy cavalry, and the victory of the king was complete. Little or no quarter seems to have been asked or given, for we are told that 15,000 Scots were left dead upon the field.

Wallace effected his escape with a remnant of his army, and fell back on Stirling. The English followed fast on his steps; but when they arrived at that place he was gone, and the town was a heap of smouldering ruins. St. Andrews and Perth were afterwards also burnt to the ground, the first by the English, and the latter by the inhabitants themselves. As the king passed through the country he laid waste the villages and the cultivated fields with fire and sword. But the land was poor, and not all the activity of the marauding forces could procure the necessaries of life for so large a body of men. Edward was compelled to retreat, and in the month of September he quitted Scotland, having regained possession only of the southern part of the country.

For several years after the signal defeat he sustained at Falkirk we hear no more of Wallace. He resigned the office of guardian of the kingdom, and, in an assembly of the barons, William Lamberton, bishop of St. Andrews, John Comyn the younger, John de Soulis, and Robert Bruce, earl of Carrick, were appointed guardians in his stead. The new appointments were made, like the old, in the name of Baliol, although that dethroned monarch was then a prisoner in London. It would appear that bitter feuds of long standing were buried in the arrangement by which Bruce and Comyn consented to act together in the name of the man who had successfully rivalled both of them in the contest for the crown. The events of the after life of John Baliol may be told in a few words. In the year 1299 the pope Boniface VIII. interceded in his behalf, and the fallen king was liberated from his confinement, and conveyed to the estate of Bailleul in Normandy, from which his ancestors took their name. There he passed the rest of his days in retirement, scarcely remembering his former high position, and little heeding the important events which were deciding the destinies of his country. He died in the year 1314.

Allusion has already been made to the heavy burdens entailed upon the English people by the repeated wars of their king. When constitutional means failed to raise the required sums, Edward did not hesitate to resort to any expedients which suggested themselves to enable him to fill his exhausted treasury. On one occasion he avowed that he had taken the cross, and should make a second journey to the Holy Land; a pretext by which he obtained a tenth of the entire income of the church for six years. At a later period he seized a large portion of the wealth deposited in the religious houses, stating his intention of repaying it on some future day. This promise was accepted by the clergy for no more than it was worth; and when he subsequently made a demand upon them of one-half of their whole incomes, the whole body of ecclesiastics strongly resisted the exaction, and ultimately complied with great reluctance. A further demand of a fourth, which was made upon them in the following year (A.D. 1295), was successfully resisted, and the king was compelled to be satisfied with a tenth. In addition to these causes of complaint, the clergy were oppressed by the officers of the crown, who seized their stores and ransacked their granaries for supplies for the king's troops. At length they applied for aid to the pope; but the only result of the application was to make their condition still more miserable. The pope granted them a bull, directing that the church revenues should not be devoted to secular purposes without the permission of the Holy See. But at this time Boniface was himself in a position of difficulty, and the bull being opposed in France, he was compelled within a year to issue another, which virtually restored matters to their former position, and removed the papal protection from the goods of the church. Acting upon the authority of the first bull, some of the English clergy refused to satisfy the demands of the king, who then took the extraordinary course of outlawing the whole body. The whole of the property of bishops, abbots, and inferior clergy was seized, inasmuch that in many cases they were left without bread to eat or a bed to lie upon. The influence of the clergy upon the people must at this period have been extremely small, as it does not appear that these arbitrary proceedings excited any indignation or interference on their behalf.

Having obtained all that he could from the church, the king extended his proceedings to the nobles, merchants, and citizens of the kingdom, whose goods he seized without a shadow of pretext. The landowners and the burghers, however, were made of more stubborn stuff than the clergy, and the opposition he here encountered was of the most decided character. In February, A.D. 1297, Edward was engaged in collecting two armies to proceed, the one into Flanders, and the other to Guienne, when the earl of Hereford, the constable of England, and the earl of Norfolk, the marshal, who had been required to quit the country with their armed vassals, directly refused to obey. The king addressed the marshal, and swore by the everlasting God that he should either go or hang; and the earl repeated the oath, and swore that he would neither go nor hang. With these words the two barons quitted the royal presence together, and 1,500 knights immediately followed them. The king thus found himself deserted by his court, and he knew that at such a moment his crown or even his life was in imminent danger. With that ability for which he was distinguished, he occupied himself in quelling the storm. He employed all his art to conciliate the clergy,

and having in some degree succeeded, he next addressed himself to secure the good-will of the people. The measure which he adopted for this purpose was as singular in design as it was successful in result. He mounted a platform in front of Westminster Hall, attended only by his son, the prince of Wales, the earl of Warwick, and the archbishop of Canterbury, and addressed the people assembled below him. The speech which he delivered was characterised by ability and utter insincerity, and the manner in which it was concluded proves him to have been an excellent actor. After a pathetic allusion to the dangers he was about to encounter for his subjects, and expressing a hope that, in the event of his death, they would preserve the succession to his son, the stern warrior-king shed tears before his audience; the archbishop also wept; and the people, overcome by these extraordinary demonstrations, rent the air with shouts of loyalty.

Edward now appointed the archbishop of Canterbury to the head of the council of regency, and proceeded to embark on his expedition to Flanders. At Winchester he was met by a deputation, who, in the name of the lords spiritual and temporal of England, tendered him a formal remonstrance. The nobles denied their liability to accompany the king to Flanders, in which country their fathers had never borne arms for the kings of England; and that, moreover, their means were so reduced by the royal exactions, that they could not, if they would, obey his command. They also designated the expedition as unnecessary and impolitic while affairs in Scotland remained in such a critical position. The king made no direct reply to the address, and feeling himself secure in the loyalty of the people, he left the nobles to their discontent, and set sail for Flanders.

Origin of the War between France and England. (See page 316).

It is necessary here to relate the circumstances which led to the expedition in question. In the year 1294 Edward had concluded a treaty of marriage between his son

Edward and Philippa, the daughter of Guy, count of Flanders. This union was opposed to the interests of the king of France, who exerted every means in his power to prevent it. Having in vain attempted to do so by a course of intrigues, Philip sent to invite the count to meet him at Corbeil, for the purpose of consulting on matters of importance. The old man, whose character was honest and unsuspicious, presented himself at the time appointed, when his person, with that of his wife, was seized by the orders of Philip, who conveyed them prisoners to Paris. This unknightly act of treachery excited general indignation throughout Europe, and the pope having remonstrated with the king, he was compelled to set the count at liberty. Before doing so, however, he compelled him to make oath that he would abandon the alliance with England, and, in pledge of the fulfilment of the vow, Philippa was required to be sent to Paris as a hostage. These demands having been reluctantly complied with, the old count took a tender farewell of his child, who was then only twelve years old, and returned to his own dominions. An appeal which he addressed to the pope for the recovery of his daughter was answered by a threat of excommunication against Philip; but that unscrupulous monarch retained possession of his fair hostage in defiance of the thunders of the church. It was at this time that the count entered into a coalition which had been recently formed by Edward, and which included the emperor of Germany, the duke of Austria, the duke of Brabant, and the count of Bar.

Quarrel between Edward I. and the Earls of Norfolk and Hereford. (See page 323).

Such were the circumstances under which Edward entered on the expedition which terminated with so little success to the English arms. He landed at Sluys in the month of August, and immediately on his arrival quarrels broke out among the sailors of the fleet, who came from different seaports, and between whom there were long-standing feuds existing. Such was the extent to which these animosities were carried, that a regular engagement

took place between the mariners of Yarmouth and those of the cinque ports, and twenty-five ships belonging to the former were burnt. It is related that, during the conflict, three of their largest ships, one of which carried the royal treasure, were taken possession of and conveyed out to sea.

While such was the condition of the British navy at this period, the land troops were occupied with similar quarrels and disorders. Among the allies of Edward there was little more unity. The cities of Flanders, rivals in wealth and power, regarded each other with a jealousy which threatened the most serious dissensions. Among the various factions were some who adhered to Philip of France, and their numbers were greatly increased when that king marched into the country at the head of an imposing force of 60,000 men. The French gained a victory over the Flemings at Furnes, and obtained possession of a number of their chief towns. Damme had been occupied by Philip, who was compelled to retire before the English forces, and Edward then advanced into the country, making an unsuccessful attack on Bruges, and going into winter quarters at Ghent. Here the most deadly quarrels broke out between the English troops and the townspeople; and in a riot which took place in the town 700 of the English were killed. Every effort was made by the king and count Guy to repress these tumults; but the feud continued without abatement, and effectually prevented any combined movements against the enemy.

Such was the position of affairs until the spring of the year 1298, when proposals of peace having been made by Philip, they were readily accepted, and the English king returned to his own country. Edward had spent large sums of money in this expedition, which had ended in a manner wholly unworthy of his fame and his resources. But the humiliation of the king had not been confined to the non-success of his arms; he was compelled to give his assent to various reforms introduced by his barons, and to add confirmations of those charters which checked the abuse of arbitrary power. Early in the preceding year the constable of the kingdom, with the earl marshal and many other of the nobles, interposed in defence of the privileges of parliament, and forbade the officers of the exchequer, in the name of the barons of the kingdom, to collect certain taxes which had been laid on by the king without the consent of the national representatives. The citizens of London were allied with the barons in this measure, and Edward found himself at length compelled to submit. From the city of Ghent, where he was then staying, he sent instructions to this effect to the council of regency, some of whom were known to favour the demands of parliament; and at the same place he granted a new confirmation of the two charters, and also of an important enactment, by which it was declared that no impost should be levied without the consent of the peers spiritual and temporal, the knights burgesses, and other freemen of the realm.

Such concessions as these were not made by Edward without great reluctance, and his annoyance at the restrictions thus placed upon him was clearly shown soon after his return to England. His barons, however, were determined that the statutes should not be evaded, and a parliament having been summoned at York, the king was called upon to give a solemn ratification of the charters he had granted. Edward excused himself at that time under the plea that he was on his way to chastise the Scots; but he gave his promise to do what was desired of him on his return, and the bishop of Durham and three barons made oath in the king's name to that effect. On his return from Scotland, Edward met his parliament at Westminster, which was assembled in March, A.D. 1299. He now endeavoured by every means in his power to gain time, and when closely pressed, he quitted London, as it were by stealth. The barons, however, were not to be thus defeated, and having followed him, and urged the fulfilment of his solemn obligations, Edward found himself compelled to assent. By an extraordinary act of craft, however, he took measures to evade the provisions of the document by adding a clause at the end which destroyed the value of the concession, and subverted the meaning of what had gone before. The cunning of the king had in this instance over-reached itself. With few exceptions the barons rose up in indignation and quitted the assembly and the city, with their retainers. Edward now proposed, as he had done before, to secure the good-will of the people; and to this end he directed the sheriffs of London to call a meeting of the citizens, and to read to them the new confirmation of the charters. The people assembled in great numbers in St. Paul's churchyard, and listened attentively. It appears that they possessed more intelligence than the king gave them credit for, for, after having applauded the earlier clauses, they no sooner heard the last, than they gave every demonstration of indignation, and proved that they fully comprehended its unworthy purport. The king now perceived that the country was unanimously against him; and having called his parliament once more together, he threw out the obnoxious clause, and granted all the concessions that had been demanded. There was, in fact, no alternative, if Edward desired to maintain his position and authority. But the king by no means intended that his power should be thus permanently curtailed, and he retained the deadliest animosity against those barons to whom he owed his humiliation. One by one these patriot nobles, whom we may believe to have been the best and most honourable men in the country, found themselves arraigned on various charges, exaggerated if true, but more commonly false, and serving only as a pretext for the king's vengeance. By means like these they were deprived of their estates, reduced to poverty, and in many cases suffered imprisonment or banishment. So far from being reduced to submission by such arbitrary measures, the rest of the barons only conceived a firmer determination to check the increase of a power which was so unjustly employed.

Four years later the king sent to the reigning pope, Clement V., to request a dispensation absolving him from the oaths he had taken, and to which he said he had been driven by a traitorous conspiracy. The pope, however, evaded the request; and when the further solicitations of Edward failed to produce a more decided effect, he found himself compelled to respect those grants which he had made law. It is a remarkable fact in English history that concessions so important should have been wrung from one of the most grasping and warlike of her kings; and it is certain that, had the resistance of the Scots been less stubborn, or the attitude of the barons less bold and determined, the people of England would have lost much of the liberty which they had obtained by the great charter.

Philip le Bel, who was inferior to Edward in warlike accomplishments, was his equal in craft and cruelty. After the English king quitted Flanders, in A.D. 1297, he had no opportunity of conducting further measures of importance in that country, which during the succeeding years was overrun by the French troops. In the year 1302 the Flemings rose against their oppressors, and gained a complete victory over them at Courtrai. That the "rabble of Flemings," as the French called them, should thus overcome the chivalry of France was a disgrace not to be endured; but while the nobles were panting for a knightly vengeance, their king was planning a safer and bloodier retaliation. For some time previously Edward had determined to abandon his ally, the count of Flanders, and to regain possession of Guienne from the king of France by treaty. The pope was now appealed to, and he proposed an alliance of marriage between the two kings. Edward, who was now a widower, was to marry Margaret, the sister of Philip, and the prince of Wales was to marry Isabella, the daughter of the French king. Such an alliance had already been contemplated with satisfaction by the negotiators. It is true that there were difficulties in the way; Edward had sworn solemnly to marry his son to Philippa, daughter of the count of Flanders; he had also pledged his honour that he would never make truce with the French king without the entire concurrence of his ally. But these obstacles served only to delay the progress of the negotiations for a few months. Edward broke off his solemn engagements abroad as readily as he threw aside his oaths at home; and in September, A.D. 1299, the double marriage took place, the son being contracted to Isabella by proxy at the same time that his father was married to Margaret.

A peace between France and England necessarily attended the conclusion of this alliance; and it was agreed that injuries remaining unredressed on either side should be compensated for, and that the possession of Guienne should be settled by negotiations; pending which, Philip gave several towns in Gascony to be held as security by the pope. In these arrangements the French king entirely disregarded his alliance with the Scots; and neither in this treaty, nor at its subsequent ratification, were they in any way mentioned. On the 20th of May, 1303, the treaty was formally concluded. Edward regained possession of the province of Guienne, and, in return, he gave up the Flemings into the hands of their enraged enemies. A few months later the French barbarously revenged themselves for their former defeat at Courtrai, by attacking the Flemish peasants of the district of Lille, and putting them to death in what was rather a massacre than a battle. A year previously count Guy of Flanders had fallen into the hands of Philip, by whom the noble old man was subjected to cruelty which soon resulted in his death. He died in his prison at Compeigne at the age of eighty-one.

CHAPTER LX.

Reign of Edward I. continued—Claims of the Pope on Scotland—Second Revolt and Subjugation of that Kingdom—Execution of Wallace—Third Revolt of Scotland under Bruce—Death of Edward I.—Estimate of his Character and Services to the Nation.

HAVING concluded peace with France, Edward immediately turned his attention to Scotland. Notwithstanding the decisive victory of Falkirk, and the apparent surrender of the cause by Wallace, the subjugation of that country was far from being effected. There still existed in every quarter a determined spirit of hostility to the English, kept alive by the memory of the recent defeats, and not less so of the preceding triumphs. In 1300 the king made an incursion into Annandale, which he laid waste, and received the speedy submission of Galloway. The Scots, who were making zealous efforts to secure assistance from foreign courts, thought it prudent to make a truce, which was ratified in November at Dumfries, and was to continue in force till the summer of the following year. Their applications, however, to the continental courts, received but little encouragement. Philip of France, as was to be expected after so recent a pacification with the English monarch, rejected their suit. The only person who seems to have responded to their appeal was the pope Boniface VIII. He wrote a letter to Edward, entreating him to put an end to his ravages and oppressions in Scotland, and adducing a great number of historical proofs of the ancient and unquestionable independence of that kingdom,—proofs with which, no doubt, the Scottish envoys had taken care to supply him. With a singular inconsistency, however, the pope concluded his letter by asserting that Scotland was, in reality, a fief of the Holy See. This claim, never before heard of, and in utter contradiction to the whole tenor of the papal brief, called forth the most earnest reply from Edward, who set about and constructed a catalogue of sovereign claims on Scotland, from the fabled age of Brutus the Trojan, who, he asserted, founded the British monarchy in the days of Eli and Samuel, down to those of king Arthur, the hero of romance rather than of history; concluding with the full and absolute homage done by William of Scotland to Henry II. of England, taking care to omit all mention of the formal abolition of that deed by Richard Cœur de Lion, who had frankly pronounced it an extorted one, and, therefore, invalid. This royal epistle was seconded by a very spirited remonstrance from a hundred and four barons, assembled by the king's command at Lincoln, who proudly maintained the temporal independence of both the kingdoms of Scotland and England of the see of Rome; declaring that they had sworn to defend the king's prerogatives, and that at no time would they permit them to be questioned.

These, or other arguments which do not appear on the face of history, produced a very sudden revulsion in the papal mind. Boniface soon after wrote to the Scots, exhorting them to cease their opposition to "his dearly beloved one in Christ," king Edward, and to seek forgiveness from God for their resistance to his claims. Edward, thus sanctioned, again advanced into Scotland in the summer of 1301, where he found the country laid waste before him by the politic Scots, and was obliged to take up his quarters, on the approach of winter, in Linlithgow, where he built a castle and kept his Christmas. Another truce was entered into the following spring, and the king then left John de Segrave as his lieutenant in Scotland, at the head of an army of 20,000 men. Early in the year 1303 the Scots having appointed John Comyn regent of the kingdom, he, with Sir Simon Frazer, not contented with maintaining the independence of the northern parts, descended into the southern counties, which Edward imagined were wholly in his power. His general, John de Segrave, marched out to repulse them; and on the morning of the 24th of February, near Roslin, he came

up with them. He had divided his army into three sections: the first division, being suddenly attacked by Comyn and Sir Simon Frazer, were speedily routed, and in their flight coming in contact with the second division, threw that also into confusion, which, however, still made a stout resistance, but was eventually also routed, fell back on the third division, and communicated its disorder to them; so that the whole force was completely put to flight, and pursued with heavy loss. The English commander himself was taken prisoner, being dangerously wounded in the very first encounter. Sixteen knights and thirty esquires were found amongst the captives, including the brother and son of the general. It is reported that the Scots were compelled to slaughter a great number of their prisoners, in order to engage with safety the successive bands that they came up with. They boasted of thus achieving three victories in one day. The *éclat* of this brilliant action turned the popular tide at once in their favour. The people everywhere came forward to assist them. The regent very soon made himself master of all the fortresses in the south, and once more the country was lost to the English.

This sudden and complete prostration of all his ambitious hopes, and reversement of his victories, effectually aroused the martial king. He assembled a great army, supported by a formidable fleet; and by rapid marches, at the head of his hosts, he appeared before Roxburgh on the 21st of May, and reached Edinburgh on the 4th of June. His progress was marked by the most terrible devastation. He came upon the devoted country like a lion exasperated by wounds of the hunters. No foe could be found able to resist him, and he ravaged the open country, and laid in ruins the towns and villages, his fleet supplying his destroying forces with abundant provisions.

Having made a short pause in Edinburgh, to leave all secure there, he again advanced, with desolating speed and vengeance, through Linlithgow and Clackmannan to Perth, and thence to Aberdeen, and so on to Moray. He posted himself in the great and strong fortress of Lochendorb, situated on an island in the midst of a Morayshire loch; and there he remained till the autumn, employed in subduing and receiving the homage of the great Highland chiefs. Tradition, says Tytler, still connects the ruins of Lochendorb, after the lapse of more than 500 years, with the name of the great English king. On his return southward he met with a stout resistance from the strong castle of Brechin, defended by Sir Thomas Maule, which was only compelled to open its gates to the conqueror after the death of its valiant commander. The victorious king took up his quarters for the winter at Dunfermline. He was careful this time not to withdraw to England, even during the inactivity of the season, nor to trust the great charge of a kingdom's safety to any deputy. His soldiers are said to have amused themselves during this time in destroying the magnificent abbey of the Benedictines; "a building," says Matthew of Westminster, "so spacious, that three kings, with all their retinues, might have been conveniently lodged there." The remains of this noble abbey, including the parish church, still attest its original splendour, and the Scots regarded it with high veneration as the resting-place of no less than eight of their ancient kings, and five of their queens.

The last remains of the army of Scotland assembled to defend the castle of Stirling, that being the only stronghold which now remained in Scottish hands; but they were speedily dispersed by the English cavalry. Soon after this, Comyn, the regent and chief commander of the forces, came in and made his submission to the royal commissioners at Strathorde, in Fifeshire; and his example was followed by all the nobility. These, with a few exceptions, as Wisheart, bishop of Glasgow, Sir John Foulis, the Steward, and a few others, were allowed to retain their lives and lands, subject only to such penalties and terms of banishment as the king might choose to impose. During Lent a parliament was held at St. Andrews, when Sir William Wallace, Sir Simon Frazer, and the governor of Stirling, were summoned to surrender themselves, on penalty of outlawry, if failing to appear. All these persons, not even excepting Frazer, accepted the terms offered to them. The brave Sir William only refused to put himself into the power of the English king except on a written assurance of life and estate, signed and sealed by the monarch himself; and his caution was at once justified by the event; for the king, on hearing this, cursed Wallace and all who supported him, and set a reward of 300 marks upon his head. The brave patriot had for a time escaped from the snare, and once more retreated to his hiding-places in the forest of Dunfermline.

Edward now turned his whole attention to the reduction of the castle of Stirling. This royal fortress, placed like an eagle's eyrie on its precipitous rock, was defended by one of the most stout-hearted men of Scotland, Sir William Oliphant, with the insignificant garrison of a hundred and forty men; yet, for about three months, that is, from the 22nd of April to the 20th of July, did they withstand the whole force of the English king. Edward directed all the operations against it in person; and brought a number of engines which threw immense stones and darts to bear upon it. He sent to England to collect all kinds of missiles, which were discharged against the place; but it was not yielded till the garrison was reduced to the extremity of famine, and the building to a mass of ruins. They were then compelled to surrender at discretion, for the ruthless conqueror would grant no other terms; and the brave defenders were obliged to solicit pardon and their lives on their knees—all circumstances of great humiliation. Their lives were given them, but they were sent to the Tower of London and other dungeons. On marching out it was found that thirteen ladies, wives and sisters of the gallant officers, had shared the perils and hardships of the siege.

Stirling reduced, there wanted only one other surrender to complete the triumph of Edward—that of Wallace, the man who has made his name and the noblest patriotism synonymous to all time. Edward made every exertion, and offered high rewards for his apprehension. One Haliburton, a soldier of the late garrison of Stirling, so far showed his unworthiness to share in the glory of the late siege as to lend himself to this base purpose. Sir William was surprised and conveyed to the castle of Dumbarton. There Sir John Monteith was the commander; and Hume, following the traditions of the time, has accused Sir John of having been the betrayer of Wallace, whom he represents as his friend, and to whom he had made known his retreat. This foul accusation, however, has been clearly refuted by succeeding historians; and indeed it does not appear how the governor of the castle, in the service of the English

king, could be in a position to act the traitor towards him. The calumny may have arisen from the invidious duty which Sir John, as a Scotchman, was under the necessity of performing,—that of retaining the prisoner in his charge, and conveying him to London.

Sir William Wallace, whose bravery and magnanimity deserved a very different treatment at the hands of a brave and martial king, was carried to London in chains as a traitor, though he had never acknowledged Edward as his sovereign, and owed him no fealty. In Stow, the London annalist, we can still perceive the sensation which the arrival of this famous warrior as a captive created in the metropolis. Crowds were assembled to gaze on him. He was conducted on horseback to Westminster by Sir John Segrave, late governor of Scotland, by the mayor, sheriffs, and aldermen of London, accompanied by other gentlemen; and in Westminster Hall he was insulted by being crowned with laurel when placed at the bar, because he had been reported to have said that he ought to be crowned there. He was condemned as a traitor, and executed, with every circumstance of ignominy, at the Elms in West Smithfield, on the 23rd of August, 1305. To this place he was drawn at the tails of horses; and, after being hanged on the gallows, while he yet breathed his bowels were taken out and burnt before his face. His head was then struck off, his body divided into quarters, one of which was sent to be exposed at Newcastle, another at Berwick, a third at Perth, and the fourth at Aberdeen; his head being stuck on a pole on London-bridge. So much did they in that day fail to perceive the everlasting infamy attendant on the unworthy treatment of the nobles of our race,—the intrepid defenders of the liberties of their country. The barbarous policy of the English king produced the very results that he sought to prevent. The whole Scottish nation resented with inexpressible indignation this disgraceful outrage perpetrated on their national hero. Everywhere the people burned with fury against England, and were ready to rise at the call of some surviving patriot.

Such a man was not long in presenting himself. Robert Bruce had not forgotten the words of fire which Wallace had addressed to him across the Carron as he was in slow and reluctant retreat from the battle of Falkirk. He remembered how he had called upon him to come forth from crouching to the tyrant; to come forth from servile submission to a glorious independence; to remember the royalty of his birth, the dignity of his family, the genius and the energies which God and nature had conferred upon him, and the profound responsibility which these had laid him under to his country. He recalled the majestic figure of that illustrious man as he bade him behold the glorious prize which Heaven itself had set before him, the most glorious which could possibly be awarded to man—that of ending the sufferings of his country; that of converting its groans, its tears of blood and shame, into cries of exultation, and of placing his native land on the firm basis of national independence.

The last spur was now given to the spirit of Bruce. The words of Wallace to him were now become so many sacred commands. Wallace had declared, that while he himself lived it should only be to defend the liberties of his people; and he prayed that his life might terminate when he was reduced to wear the chains of the tyrant. He had been compelled to wear them by treason, and he had perished in his greatness. No indignities, no attempted humiliations, could pluck from him the sublime immortality of the martyr—the beautiful halo of a nation's homage. The die was cast for Robert Bruce. The spirit of Wallace had fallen upon him; henceforth he must spurn the blandishments of the English king, and tread the same path to death or victory.

And indeed Bruce had much to risk as well as to aspire to. His father had remained to the last attached to the English interests. On his death, in 1304, Edward had fully invested him with all his hereditary rights, titles, and estates, both in England and Scotland. He had all that the most ambitious nobleman could desire, short of the crown itself. For that crown the host of conflicting and, for the most part, unworthy competitors had afforded him at least plausible ground for standing aloof and leaning towards the English power which held them in check. He had accordingly been honoured when other of the greatest men of the realm had been fined, mulcted, and punished. He had been entrusted with considerable commands; amongst others, with the important fortress of Kildrummie in Aberdeenshire. But now things were come to such a pitch between the English king and his country, that there could be no longer any wavering in the bosom of a true man. Edward appeared resolved to reduce Scotland to the condition of a conquered province. If he set up a nominal king in place of the imbecile Baliol it would be Comyn, whom he regarded as a traitor. It was time to reveal himself as his country's champion.

Edward having once more finished his work of subjugation, and all Scotland lying prostrate at his feet, he now set to work about the important task of so modelling the government and administration of the country that it should most completely remain in his grasp as a permanent portion of his realm. For this purpose he appointed a council, so called, of the Scottish nation. This was to consist of two bishops, two abbots, two earls, two barons, and two representatives of the boroughs, who were to assemble in London, and to sit, in conjunction with twenty commissioners of the English parliament, to frame a constitution for the conquered territory. But this council, as was intended, carried things with a high hand against the people of Scotland. It cleared away all the Scottish laws and customs at a sweep, and substituted English ones in their stead. It destroyed all ancient monuments which perpetuated the spirit of nationality. Whatever histories or records had escaped the former search of the king were now ruthlessly destroyed; and the work of utterly rooting out the Scottish name and institutions was going on swimmingly, when the whole was suddenly brought to a stand by a fresh and more determined insurrection.

The resolve of Bruce to throw off all disguise and declare himself openly for his country had been accelerated by the treason of Comyn; and six months had scarcely passed over the bloody relics of Wallace when the Scots were up in arms again, round the champion he had himself invoked to assume that post. In June, 1305—two months before the execution of Wallace—it appears that Bruce had made a secret compact with William de Lamberton, the bishop of St. Andrews, of mutual aid and support. This contract, still preserved in the Annals of Lord Hailes, had for its ultimate object the claims of Bruce on the crown. Comyn had come by some means to the knowledge of this league; had

pretended to join in it, but had betrayed it to the king. Bruce was marked for due vengeance by Edward, who only waited for an opportunity also to seize his three brothers, resident in Scotland. But through the friendship of the earl of Gloucester, the son-in-law of the king, Bruce was apprised of his danger by the earl sending him a pair of gilt spurs and a purse of gold, under pretence that he had borrowed them of him. Bruce caught the meaning of the device, and resolved to escape at once. To this purpose, tradition says, he had his horses shod backwards, so as to deceive those who might attempt to trace his route, for the ground was then covered with snow. Bruce arrived safely in a few days at his castle of Lochmaben, in Annandale, the chief seat of his family; and here he found, fortunately, a great number of the Scottish nobility assembled, and in the midst of them no other than John Comyn, his professed friend, but treacherous, secret foe. If he had wanted any evidences of the perfidy of this man, he had them now in his pocket; for on the way thither from town he had met a courier bearing letters from Comyn to king Edward, urging the absolute necessity of his instant death or imprisonment. This man he slew, on the principle "that dead men tell no tales, and carry no messages;" and the fatal secret now in his possession presents us with a certain clue to the motive of a much more startling act which he perpetrated soon after.

Death of Comyn.

The assembled nobles were astonished at his sudden apparition among them; and, doubtless, much more so was Comyn. Bruce made no secret of his purpose, though the Judas was present. He declared that he was come to live and die amongst them in defence of his country and its liberties; to wipe from the Scottish name the shame which it endured from the tyranny of the usurper, and to wash it away in the blood of their oppressor. He pointed to the mountains which had defended them from the Romans, and would still defend them from every attempt on their homes and rights. He reminded them of the fate of Wallace, and bade them assure themselves that the same fate inevitably awaited them, if they did not scorn to live the life of dogs, or were not determined to drive the implacable tyrants from the land.

Certain that this harangue, which electrified the whole assembly, would be transmitted without delay to London, he followed Comyn, on the dissolution of the party, into the cloisters of the Minorites at Dumfries, and ran him through the body. Hurrying from the convent, he cried, "To horse!" and Sir Roger Kirkpatrick, one of his attendants, seeing him greatly agitated, demanded whether the traitor was slain. "I doubt so," replied Bruce. "You doubt!" exclaimed Kirkpatrick; "I will make sure," and so saying, he rushed into the monastery, stabbed the Comyn to the heart, and killed also his kinsman, Sir Robert Comyn, who strove

WALLACE CROWNED WITH LAUREL IN WESTMINSTER HALL. (See page 329.)

to defend him. From this circumstance the Kirkpatrick family adopted the crest of a bloody hand holding a dagger, and the motto, "I make sicker."

The die was now cast. There was no retreat, no reconciliation, after that terrible deed. Bruce called his staunchest friends hastily around him; they were few, but devoted spirits. The bishops of St. Andrews and Glasgow, the abbot of Scone, the four brothers of Bruce, his nephew Thomas Randolph, his brother-in-law Christopher Seton, and some ten or twelve young men gathered at the call. Bruce flew in various directions, exciting his countrymen to arms. He attacked and defeated the English, took some of their forts, and drove them from the open country.

Edward, on receiving this news, at once prepared to take signal vengeance on the insurgents, and this time to give the nation such a castigation as should effectually quell its spirit. Not waiting for his own slower movements, he sent on Aymer de Valence, the earl of Pembroke, with a small army, to check the spread of the disaffection. He met with Bruce near Methven, in Perthshire, on the 19th of June, and falling on his forces by surprise, he put them utterly to the rout. Bruce was three times unhorsed in the battle, and escaped with the greatest danger. His friends the earl of Atholl, Simon Frazer, and Sir Christopher Seton, were taken prisoners and executed. Amongst the prisoners was also his nephew Randolph. His queen and his daughter Marjory having left the fortress of Kildrummie, were seized by the earl of Ross in the sanctuary of St. Duthac, at Tain: the knights who attended them were put to death, and they themselves were sent to England, where they remained prisoners eight years. His brother Nigel, much beloved by the people, was compelled to surrender Kildrummie, and was also hanged and afterwards beheaded at Berwick, with many other knights and gentlemen. He himself with great difficulty made his escape into the mountains of Atholl, with about five hundred followers, the sole remnant of the army with which he had hoped to redeem Scotland. For many months he and this little band wandered amongst the hills in the utmost wretchedness, destitute of shelter, and often of food. A price was set upon their heads; their enemies, the Comyns, infuriated by the slaughter of their chief, and now in the ascendant as allies of England, pursued them with vindictive rage, driving them farther and farther into the labyrinth of the hills. On reaching the borders of Argyll, they encountered the Lord of Lorn, who had married an aunt of the Comyn, at the head of 1,000 men, and who occupied a narrow defile. A desperate conflict took place, and Bruce and his followers narrowly escaped extermination. Finally, Bruce found means to pass over to the Isle of Rachrine, on the north coast of Ireland.

Here was a reverse terrible and complete enough to have extinguished the hopes of all but a true hero. His forces defeated, destroyed, or dispersed; his wife and daughter captive; his brother and most of his chief men taken and executed; himself a fugitive; the English king still lord paramount in Scotland. All readers are familiar with the story of the spider which Bruce saw in a moment of his deepest depression,—a moment when he was nearest to despair, and which rekindled his hope and ardour, by six times failing in its attempt to raise itself to the roof of the hut under which he lay, but accomplishing its object on the seventh essay. But it is not so generally known that such was his distress of mind, and the hardships he endured after the battle of Methven, that he was affected by a scorbutic disorder, then styled leprosy. Mr. Train informed Sir Walter Scott that Bruce was, according to tradition, benefited by drinking the waters of a well about a mile north of the town of Ayr—thence called "King's Ease;" that, in grateful memory of this and of the immortal hero of his time, Sir William Wallace, he built eight houses for lepers round the well, to whom and their successors he left a stated allowance of oatmeal and £28, Scottish money, per annum; and that this institution remained so long as the family of Wallace existed there. when the property was purchased by the town of Ayr, and its proceeds devoted to the poor.

Whatever was the momentary despondency and misery of Bruce, he passed over from Rachrine early in the spring of 1307, in order to make one more effort for the expulsion of the English. His followers on landing on the Carrick coast, near his ancestral castle of Turnberry, amounted only to 300; and he was there nearly betrayed by the unexplained lighting of a fire upon a hill, the very signal which he had agreed upon if it were safe to approach. As he drew near the landing-place he was met by the information that the English were in full possession of Carrick, and lord Percy, with a strong garrison, held Turnberry Castle. Bruce was thunderstruck at the intelligence; but, making a sudden attack on a party of English that lay close at hand, he created a momentary panic, and, under advantage of that, made good his retreat into the mountains. The war became desultory and undecided; and two of Bruce's brothers, Thomas and Alexander, as they were bringing over a band of Irish adventurers to his assistance, were taken prisoners by Duncan M'Dowal, a chief of Galloway, and, being conducted to king Edward, were instantly ordered for execution.

Fortune still continued to pursue Bruce. He could only preserve himself by hiding in the hills and wastes of Galloway, till, on the 10th of May, he succeeded at Loudon Hill in completely defeating the earl of Pembroke. Three days after he again defeated the English under the earl of Gloucester, and pursuing them to the castle of Ayr, there besieged them.

Meantime Edward had been advancing by slow marches northward. Though it is not distinctly stated by the historians, there is little doubt that his health was giving way at the time that he first received the news at Winchester. He had immediately sent off the earl of Pembroke, and prepared to follow himself. He knighted his son, the prince of Wales, with great pomp and ceremony, preparatory to his taking part in the expedition, who, in turn, knighted, on the 22nd of May, 270 young men of noble family. At the feast given on this occasion, in the palace of Westminster, he made a solemn vow to God to avenge the death of Comyn, and punish the insurgent Scots; and at this time he conjured his son, and the whole company, in the event of his death, to keep his body unburied until this vow was accomplished. Thus he had the probability of death in his thoughts at the outset of this expedition, and he advanced in it with the tardiness of a sick man. While Bruce was spending the winter at Rachrine, he was passing it in severe illness at Lanercost. It was the commencement of July when he arrived at Carlisle, where the news of Bruce's fresh successes, and the defeat and close besiege-

ment of his generals, had the effect of rousing his irritable temperament to a desperate effort. He threw aside the litter in which he had hitherto travelled, mounted his horse, and having reached, on the 7th of that month, the village of Burgh-upon-Sands, he sunk completely exhausted, with his latest breath, and with a tenacity of purpose characteristic of the man, enjoining his successor, through the ministers who surrounded him, never to cease his efforts till he had thoroughly subjugated Scotland.

Thus terminated this remarkable man his remarkable career, in the sixty-ninth year of his age, and the thirty-fifth of his reign. Since the days of Richard I. there had been no martial monarch of equal bravery and ability; since that of the Conqueror, none who had the same genius for civil administration and the framing of laws and institutions which gave, not only a character to his own times, but to the ages which came after him. Hume does not hesitate to assert that "the enterprises of this prince, and the projects which he formed and brought near to a conclusion, were more prudent, more regularly conducted, and more advantageous to the solid interests of his kingdom, than those which were undertaken in any reign, either of his ancestors or successors." However we may be disposed to modify this praise in regard to what Edward actually carried out, there can be no question that his perception of the vast advantages which would result to every part of the island from its consolidation into one kingdom, was evidence of a great and comprehensive genius; and the ardour, based on an indomitable spirit of perseverance, with which he pursued that great end, is equal evidence of a mind, not only of the clearest acumen, but of the loftiest qualities of human nature. He succeeded in winning to the English nation, and amalgamating with it for ever, the principality of Wales; and if he failed in effecting the annexation of Scotland, it was only through being actuated more by the military spirit of the times, than by those moral and political influences which later generations have discovered to be the most prevailing. It was beyond the intellectual horizon of the age to aim at the union of the kingdoms by the careful demonstration of those greater mutual advantages, and of the infinitely expanded capabilities of glory and power to Britain, as a whole, which were applied successfully four centuries afterwards.

By seeking to accomplish the union of England and Scotland by the forces most familiar to the spirit of that era, that is, by the powers of arms and numerical ascendency, his scheme, grand and beneficent in itself, necessarily failed. The plan was premature; it existed in the nature of things, but it lacked that philosophical regard to national character and feeling, and that tone of mutual forbearance, which it required centuries yet to ripen. The rude idea of bearing down a brave and high-spirited people by armed power and arbitrary will necessarily irritated those on whom the attempt was made; and it then became a question of moral forces, and of the natural defences of the country, whether it should succeed. It succeeded in Wales, though after a brave resistance, because there was no proportion betwixt the extent and the physical resources of the two countries. It failed in Scotland, because the areas of the two contending kingdoms, though greatly unequal, were yet more approximate; and because the martial qualities and spirit of proud independence had been long fostered in Scotland by the arduous contests of different clan and [illegible] Scotch were a hardy and a heroically brave people, with their magnificent mountains at their back; and in their struggles with the ponderous power of England discovered an invincible vigour, not only of resistance, but of resilience. Though hurled violently to the earth time after time, they rose, Antæus-like, as if with augmented strength and freshness. While the two nations, therefore, heated by contest, and the savage warfare of that age, learned to hate one another with a vigorous and long-continuing hatred, they learned also to know each other's strength, and inwardly to respect it. Therefore, after the battle of Bannockburn, English dreams of the subjugation of Scotland began to wane, and though there still were many and bloody wars between the nations, there ceased to exist on either side hope of conquest by mere force of arms.

In these conflicts good as well as evil was elicited, and the bravery and spirit of dominion which distinguish united Great Britain no doubt draw a large amount of their life from the mutual struggles and rivalries of the two peoples. In the very attempts, therefore, of Edward to add Scotland to the kingdom by force, as he did Wales, he may be said to have laid the foundation of much of the common greatness of the nation; but from incidental causes arising out of his military attempts, both in Scotland and France, and still more from his directly constructive talent and wisdom, we owe to him much which we are apt to lose sight of in the blaze of his wars and expeditions. He was as remarkable for his sturdy maintenance of the laws as for his military ambition. Simple and frugal himself, he was ever ready to support useful enterprises. He was liberal of his treasures on such occasions. Easy and affable to his courtiers and dependents, he was yet severe in restraining license and punishing offenders. His fine person and skill in military exercises made him popular with the people, when he did not press too heavily on them by his expensive wars; and thus, relying on his sense of justice, they were not backward in expressing their opinions, as we have seen. Though he was extremely cruel to the Jews—a feature of his character springing from the prejudices of his age—and often forgot the magnanimity of a great monarch in his resentment against those who successfully thwarted his plans, as in the case of Sir William Wallace and others, his sense of justice in his calmer moments and in his peaceful pursuits was so great that he not only encouraged an honourable administration of the laws, but he corrected and amended them, and added so many new ones, in accordance with the progress of society, that he has been termed the English Justinian. Sir Edward Coke, in his "Institutes," says that the statutes passed in his reign were so numerous and excellent, that they actually deserved the name of establishments, being more constant, standing, and durable than any made from his reign to the time of that great lawyer; and Sir Matthew Hale pays him the like compliment, declaring that down to his own day they had scarcely received any addition. He was the first to establish justices of the peace. He repressed robberies and encouraged trade by giving merchants an easy method of recovering their debts. He abolished the office of chief justiciary, which he thought possessed too much power. He divided the court of exchequer into four distinct courts, each attending to its own branch, and independent of any one magistrate; while the

several courts became rivals, not checks to each other; a circumstance tending greatly to improve the practice of law in England.

The grand obstacle to the impartial execution of justice in those times was the power of the great barons. These despots he strove to overawe and restrain; but while aiming at this he committed a grand oversight by allowing them to entail their estates, which of all things has contributed not only to perpetuate but to augment most unduly the influence of the aristocracy on the constitution and the public service. On the other hand, he has the honour of being the first Christian prince who put a stop to the alarming absorption of the landed property of the country by the clergy, setting bounds to it by passing a statute of mortmain. In this, however, he was avowedly actuated by his wish to prevent the diminution of feudal services and emoluments, which became extinguished when lands passed from the laity to the church. But, to compensate the clergy, he was the first to allow the levy of first fruits.

means or other, freeing themselves from their obligations, through summoning to parliament the lesser barons and knights. Henry III. had made it an occasional practice to allow these lesser noblesse to choose a certain number of their order in each county to represent their whole body: hence our knights of shires. Edward established this as a fixed and uniform practice, and he went further. He had been obliged, for his expedition into Poictou and the repression of the Welsh, to levy no less than a sixth of all the movables from the laity, and a moiety of all ecclesiastical benefices. He saw clearly this necessity must often recur if he prosecuted his great designs of national aggrandisement, and he resolved to summon the representatives of all the boroughs to parliament. Here, then, we have the origin of our House of Commons; and we come, in this fact, upon one of the greatest epochs in our national history. This great event took place in the year 1295, in the twenty-third year of Edward I.'s reign, and is a date that should be for ever memorable.

Carlisle Castle.

Far greater, however, were the innovations which this monarch introduced into the British constitution—innovations of the mighty influence of which he could form no conception himself. He was the father and originator of the parliament of England. Before his time the great barons had met the sovereign to determine on peace or war, and to consent to the raising of the necessary funds. But Edward had occasion to make such frequent and extensive demands on his barons, that he frequently found them daring to reject his calls for money, and refusing even his summons to war, as in the case of Bohun, earl of Hereford, and Bigod, earl of Norfolk, who positively declined to follow him to his campaign in Flanders. The obvious means of at once creating a counterbalancing power to this overgrown one of feudal chiefdom, and of replenishing his coffers, was to elevate the people of the towns, who had now advanced to a considerable degree of wealth. His father had sought to supply the diminution of revenue and power which had occurred from the great feudal barons gradually, by one

The words of the preamble of the writ, by which this new power in the state was called into existence, are truly remarkable, and indicate a principle of liberal equity in the mind of the king worthy of a British monarch. "It is a most equitable rule," says this document, "that what concerns all should be approved of by all, and common dangers be repelled by united efforts."

But no party whatever had at the time the slightest idea of the unparalleled importance of this innovation; of what a tree lay in this small acorn of popular life; what a colossus in this constitutional embryo. The king, with all his sagacity, did not grasp it in its full Titanic bulk and multiplicity of bearing; he was looking rather at his own necessities. The barons certainly did not, or they would have opposed it with all their power. Least of all did the people themselves comprehend the act which was calling them from the borders of serfdom to become the ruling power in the nations, the artificers and foster-fathers of the world's civilisation. It was to them

the new birth from slavery, degradation, and contempt, into life, liberty, and greatness. Yet they shrunk from it as a burdensome imposition, a repulsive duty. The people who resided in the country under the great barons still were treated as a very inferior class, and with much of that haughty rudeness and injustice which marked the earlier ages of Norman feudality. Those who had escaped into towns, and devoted themselves to trade, had acquired many privileges in comparison with those who still tilled the soil. They were endowed with liberty to trade; boroughs were erected by royal patent, in which they were empowered to farm their own tolls and customs, to elect their own magistrates, and were freed from any attendance on the sheriffs or county courts. But they still bore about with them the traces of the iron of serfdom, which for so many ages had entered into their souls. They were rude in dress, in manners, and little enlightened on matters beyond their own immediate sphere. The people of London, as was seen when Edward attempted to impose on them in regard to the charter, were much in advance of the inhabitants of other towns, who retained a deep sense of their own humility, and a dread of the feudal lords.

When, therefore, representatives were called for from their body to attend parliament, every one shrank from the appointment. They heard with consternation of their election; and it was found necessary, says Brady, in his "History of Boroughs," for the aldermen and councils of the towns to take sureties from these deputies of the people for their due attendance. To them a journey to London at that day was a most formidable enterprise, both from the perils and toils of the way and the great expense. Their charges were therefore borne by the respective corporations. They had so little idea of the honour or benefit of appearing as legislators, that they regarded the function as destitute of both profit and repute. They knew that they should be looked on with scorn, if not direct insult, by the great lords with whom they had to assemble. And, in fact, these proud men, both barons and knights, disdained to mix with so mean a throng as they regarded them. They compelled them to sit apart; and these unhonoured legislators were glad to hasten away and get them home again the moment they had voted the necessary sums.

Little were these primeval commoners aware of what they were to grow into; that within three hundred years they would rise to be virtually and avowedly the chief power of the state; that they would not only hold the purse-strings of the nation, but would have called before them, arraigned, condemned, and executed the very monarch of the realm on a charge of high treason against the people; that, having given a fresh trial to this monarch's family, they would, on finding it incurably despotic, have driven it for ever from the throne, elected a king on the basis, not of hereditary right, but of the popular will, and issued a new national charter, under the title of a Bill of Rights, declaring that the people were the source of all power. The contempt of the aristocracy, compelling them to sit apart, was the deciding cause of their becoming a distinct house, the House of the Commons; and this House of Commons has risen, in about four centuries and a half, though still too neglectful of its great powers, to the noblest position of any senate which the world ever saw, its words listened to by the proudest kings as most potent for peace or war, and felt in every region of the earth as the hope of the enslaved, the terror of the despot, the central citadel of civilisation and freedom. It can point to a history as glorious as its origin was humble.

Yet even in the time of the first Edward the vigour inherent in the people began to manifest itself in these their representatives. As the royal necessities continued to increase, and the king's demands for money and men to become proportionably heavy, the commons plucked up courage, and began, though not allowed to legislate, to present petitions of their grievances. To these petitions the king, from perceiving his dependence on the growing wealth and resources of this class, was obliged to listen with attention and at least external respect. With his growing difficulties these petitions became more frequent and more bold in tone. They were referred to the judges, and when sanctioned by them, were submitted to the king, and frequently to the barons, and eventually became laws. Here was the young lion beginning to feel his strength and to put it forth, had the upper classes and the court been able to see it; but it yet came forward in too modest a shape. This power was next greatly augmented by the knights of the shires being, as a representative and not a hereditary body, removed from the baronial assembly, and by the king appointed to meet with the other representative class, that from the boroughs. This common feature of delegation made the transition natural and easy. The knights and country gentlemen made now no scruple to assemble with the burgesses of the towns on this common principle, and all distinction was soon lost in the lower house, which thenceforth assumed a place and dignity worthy of its functions.

There was another institution which arose simultaneously with the House of Commons, and from precisely the same causes, the king's necessities and his admirable sense of political justice. He was obliged to levy contributions from the clergy; and he deemed it absolutely necessary that, as a body, they should also send up representatives to an assembly of their own to impose the taxes on their own order. This great king was four hundred years in advance of the legislators of the reign of George III., who lost an empire rather than admit the doctrine that there should be no taxation without representation. He not only voluntarily avowed the principle, but immediately acted upon it. The inferior clergy, for the first time in English history, therefore, met by delegation as a lower house of convocation.

Yet Edward was not so liberal where his own prerogative was concerned; and this reign presents the narrative of a great contest for the confirmation of the great charter of the nation, and the lesser charter, that of the forests. In both cases, however, the king was compelled to give way, and under him the great charter was finally and fully established. From that day, whatever might be the arbitrary encroachments on the liberties of the people, whether it were the erection of the Star Chamber, imprisonment by warrants from the privy-council, martial law, or practices of a similar stamp, these have always been looked upon as violations of the constitution; and the validity of the great charter as the basis of English government, and the sure touchstone of every act of government, has never since been formally disputed.

All these circumstances marked the reign of Edward I. as one of the most important in our history. The organic

principles which he introduced into our constitution struck deep and indestructible roots there, and have, by their permanent and progressive operation, made us in a great measure as a nation what we are.

Edward had a numerous family by his two wives, but a great many of his children died in their infancy. By his first wife, Eleanor of Castile, Edward, his heir and successor, was the only son, out of four, who survived him. Of eleven daughters by the same queen, four only appear to have lived. Joan was married, first to the earl of Gloucester, and after his death to Ralph de Monthermer. Margaret married John, duke of Brabant; Elizabeth married first, John, earl of Holland, and secondly, the earl of Hereford Mary was abbess of Ambresbury. By his second wife, Margaret of France, he had a daughter who died in infancy, and two sons, Thomas, created earl of Norfolk and mareschal of England; and Edmund, made earl of Kent by his brother Edward II.

Tomb of Eleanor, Queen of Edward I., in Westminster Abbey

CHAPTER LXI.

Edward II.—Weakness of the King—His favourite Gaveston—The King's Marriage with Isabella of France—Gaveston's Death—Losses in Scotland—Battle of Bannockburn—Edward Bruce attempts to conquer Ireland—Incursions of the Scots under Robert Bruce.

The transition from Edward I. to his son, Edward II., was an abrupt descent from power to weakness. It was one of those striking examples of the extraordinary succession of a feeble son to a great and able father which

have puzzled the world to account for, from the days of Solomon and Rehoboam to our own. In all ranks and departments of life we are met, in every age, by this singular phenomenon of men distinguished by pre-eminent genius, and who have made, by the vigour of their intellectual action, a strong impression on their age, leaving behind them an enfeebled or commonplace offspring. In some cases philosophical inquirers have supposed this to have been the result of an ill-assorted or ill-cemented marriage, where the union has not been one of soul and affection, but a mere conventional association, yielding imperfect fruit. In others it would seem as if the parent had exhausted, by almost superhuman efforts of mind, the bulk of his mental energy, even consuming beforehand the portion due to his posterity. Whatever be the cause, the examples of such deficiency in the sons of such great men are prominent and numerous, and none are more melancholy than the one now before us.

The great monarch whose proud ambition it had been to embrace the whole island in his empire, to maintain his possessions in France, and to rule his kingdom by new and superior institutions, was gone, and there appeared on the throne a youth of three-and-twenty, handsome, generous, and agreeable, but destitute of any trait which implied the elements of future greatness. He was not even vigorous in the passions which carry youth out of the direct line. He had no decided tendency to any dangerous vice. He was gentle and disposed to enjoy the social advantages of his high position. The people of all classes and orders hastened to swear fealty to him, arguing from the prestige of his parentage, and the reputation of his amiability, a fortunate reign. But the very first movements of the young king

Piers Gaveston.

were fatal to those anticipations, and both at home and abroad brought a cloud over the brilliant visions which had attended his ascension to the throne. He was essentially weak, and all weak things seek extraneous support. The vine and the ivy cling to the tree that is near them, and the effeminate monarch inevitably seeks the fatal support of favourites. This was the rock on which Edward's fortunes instantly struck, and the mischief of which no experience could induce him to repair.

This disastrous propensity to favouritism, which early manifested itself, had excited the alarm of the stern old king, and led him to take decided measures against the evils which it threatened to produce. There was a brave Gascon knight, who had served in the army of Edward I. with high honour, and whose son, Piers Gaveston, had consequently been admitted into the establishment of the young prince. This youth was remarkably handsome and accomplished. He was possessed of singular grace of carriage and elegance of demeanour. In all the exercises of the age, both martial and social, he excelled, and was full of the sprightly sallies of wit and mirth which are so natural to the Gascon. The young prince became thoroughly fascinated by him. He was naturally disposed to strong and confidential friendship, and gave himself up to the society of this gay young courtier with all the ardour of youth. His father, quickly perceiving this extravagant prepossession, and foreseeing all its fatal consequences, had banished the favourite from the kingdom. On his death-bed he again solemnly warned him against favourites, depicting to him the certain ruin that such foolish attachments would bring upon him in the midst of powerful and jealous nobles; and forbade him, on pain of his curse, ever to recall Gaveston to England.

But no sooner was the breath out of the old king's body, than the infatuated Edward forgot every solemn injunction laid upon him. The Scots were again strong a-field, and the late king had taken an oath from his son that he should never be buried till they were once more subjugated. But regardless of this, the young king, after making a feint of prosecuting the Scottish war, and marching as far as Cumnock on the borders of Ayrshire, there halted, and retraced his steps to London without attempting anything whatever. Arriving in London, he at once buried the body of his father in Westminster Abbey, on the 27th of October.

The only thing for which he appeared impatient was the return of his favourite Gaveston, whom he had recalled the moment the sceptre fell into his hands; and the royal summons was as promptly obeyed as sent. Gaveston joined his royal patron before he returned from Scotland. The earldom of Cornwall had been conferred on him before his arrival; and the thoughtless upstart appeared in the midst of the court covered with his new honours, and disposed to show his resentment for past disdain to the most powerful men of the kingdom. Under the ascendancy of Gaveston, the king displaced all his father's old and experienced ministers. There was a revolution in the great offices of the court, as sudden as it was complete. The chancellor, the treasurer, the lords of the exchequer, the judges, and every other holder of an important post, were dismissed, and others more suited to the fancy or partiality of this favourite substituted. To his own share of honours and emoluments there appeared no limit. The earldom of Cornwall had been held by Edmond, son of Richard, king of the Romans, and was an appanage which had not only been possessed by a prince of the blood, but was amply sufficient of itself for the maintenance of one. But this seemed little to the king for the man whom he delighted to honour. He was continually lavishing fresh honours and riches on Gaveston. He handed to him the treasure which his father had laid up for the prosecution of the crusades; he presented him with estate after estate, many of them conferring fresh titles of distinction; and it was said that you could scarcely travel into any part of the kingdom without beholding splendid houses and parks, formerly possessed by great families, now conferred on this young favourite. Nor did the royal bounty stop here. The king gave him extensive grants of lands in Guienne; and, as if he would raise him to a par with royalty itself, he married him to his own niece, Margaret de Clare, sister to the earl of Gloucester, and appointed him lord chamberlain. All this did not seem to satisfy the king's desire of heaping honours and wealth upon him; and he is reported to have said that, if it were possible, he would give him the kingdom itself.

It would have been strange if the favourite, under such a rain of favour and fortune, had displayed more wisdom than his royal friend. It would have required a mind of peculiar fortitude and moderation not to have been thrown off the balance by such a rush of greatness, and Gaveston was not of that character. He was gay, vain, and volatile, and rejoiced in the opportunity of humbling and insulting all who had real claims to superiority over himself. The great and proud nobles who had surrounded the throne of Edward I. in the midst of its victorious splendour, and who had contributed by their counsels and their swords to place it above all others in Europe, naturally beheld with ill-concealed resentment this unworthy concentration of the royal grace and munificence in one so far inferior to them in birth and merit; and Gaveston, instead of endeavouring to appease that resentment, did all in his power to exasperate it by every species of ostentation and parade of his advantages. Vanity, profusion, and rapacity of fresh acquisition, all united in him. He kept up the style and establishment of a prince; he treated the gravest officers of state and the possessors of the noblest names with studied insolence. He imagined that in possessing the favour of the king nothing could again shake him, and therefore he was as little solicitous to conciliate friends as he was careless to make enemies. At every joust and tournament he gloried in foiling the greatest of the English nobility and princes, and did not spare them in their defeat, but ridiculed them to his companions with jest and sarcasm. This could not last long without combining the whole court and kingdom for his destruction, and perhaps for his master's.

The young king was bound, by the laws of feudalism, to pass over to France, and do homage to Philip for his province of Guienne, and, by those of chivalry, to fulfil, as early as possible, the contract of marriage with the princess Isabella, to whom he had been long affianced. This was a contract into which his father had been led in the course of his ambitious projects, and for which he had broken off the previous contract with Guy, count of Flanders, for his daughter Philippa. It was a marriage projected in cruel perfidy, the old count being left to the malice of his enemies, and to perish in prison in his eighty-

first year, and the fair, forsaken Philippa, who was really attached to Edward, dying of a broken heart about two years before this ill-fated espousal. The results of this marriage were as disastrous as its arrangement was unprincipled. Isabella soon came to entertain a deep contempt for and deeper hatred of her husband, and remains branded to all time as the accomplice in, if not the instigator, of his murder; and from this alliance sprung those claims on the crown of France, which steeped the soil of that country with blood, and raised an enmity between the two nations prolific of ages of carnage, bitterness, and misery.

Isabella of France was reputed to be the most beautiful woman of her time, and she was as high-spirited and intriguing as she was handsome. The royal couple were married on the 28th of January, 1308, with great pomp and ceremony, in the church of Our Lady of Boulogne, five kings and three queens being present on the occasion. No great affection appears to have existed on either side. Isabella could not fail to be already well aware of her husband's character, and she is said to have trusted to her influence to overturn the king's favour for Gaveston, and to be able to rule him and the kingdom herself. Edward, though wedded to the loveliest woman of the age, and surrounded by every species of festivity and rejoicing, evinced, on his part, no other desire than to get back as speedily as possible to his beloved Gaveston, to whom, in his absence, he had left the management of the kingdom—a fresh indignity to his own royal kinsmen. The festal gaieties of the French court were suddenly broken off to gratify this impatient anxiety of the king to return, and the royal couple embarked for England, accompanied by a numerous retinue of French noblesse, who came to attend the coronation.

Gaveston, accompanied by a great array of the English aristocracy, hastened to meet the king and queen on landing; and the scene which ensued was by no means calculated to create respect for the king, either in the mind of his young bride or of her distinguished countrymen present. Forgetting the very presence of the queen, Edward rushed into the arms of his favourite and overwhelmed him with caresses and terms of endearment. The queen looked on with evident contempt: her kinsmen with open indignation.

The coronation took place at Westminster on the 24th of February; and this great occasion, which, by judicious management, might have been made a means of uniting all parties, and raising the respect for the king, by his irremediable and utterly blind devotion to his favourite, became a fresh cause of scorn and exasperation. This fatal trait in the monarch appeared rather like the effect of what, in those ages, was called glamour, the spell of some powerful sorcerer, or of witchcraft, cast over an individual to destroy him, than merely weakness or folly. It seemed as if every opportunity was sought, rather than merely employed, to exalt the favourite, no matter at whatever cost, whatever risk, or whatever alienation of men's minds. Gaveston was put forward as the principal personage—the principal object of attention and worship, to the great insult of the barons and chief men of the realm, all now assembled. He only must carry the crown before the king and queen, though this was an office to which the great earls of Lancaster or Hereford might have laid more fitting claim. The nobles were filled with indignation, which Gaveston, instead of endeavouring to disarm by more modest conduct, appeared to take a particular pleasure in aggravating to the extreme. He appeared in the greatest splendour of attire, and in his equipage and retinue outshining them all. In the tournaments which succeeded, he challenged, and by his indisputable vigour and address succeeded in unhorsing, the four most illustrious nobles of the land, men distinguished not only for their high rank, their great estates, and high connections, but as the successful leaders of the national armies, the earls of Lancaster, Hereford, Pembroke, and Warenne. This brought matters to a crisis. The anger of the whole nobility now burst forth beyond all bounds. The barons, four days after the coronation, appeared before the king with a petition which had rather the tone of a remonstrance, and insisted that he should instantly banish Piers Gaveston. The king, hesitating, and yet alarmed, replied that he would give them an answer in parliament.

Great Seal of Edward II.

When this parliament met, it appeared fully armed, and

with an air that menaced civil war, if its terms were not complied with. Lancaster, by far the most powerful subject in England, was the centre and head of this movement. He was first prince of the blood; possessed of immense estates, which were on the eve, by his marriage with the heiress of the earl of Lincoln, of being increased to no less than six earldoms, including all those powers and jurisdictions which in that age were attached to land, and made the great noble a species of king on his own estates, and over a great number of influential vassals, many of them being what were called lesser barons and knights. Lancaster was turbulent, ambitious, and haughty. He had received the deadliest affronts from Gaveston which a man of his proud character could possibly receive from an upstart, and he therefore hated him with a deadly hatred. This feeling was actively encouraged by the queen, who, herself inclined to rule, and having hoped to indulge easily this passion for power through the weakness of the king, saw with keen resentment her plans disappointed by the all-engrossing influence of the favourite. The rest of the barons, gladly gathering round Lancaster, and taking courage from the favouring disposition of the queen, resolved to crush the reigning parasite. They bound themselves by an oath to expel him from the kingdom. With his parliament in this temper, and disturbances and robberies appearing in various parts of the kingdom—possibly fomented by the barons, or at least left unrestrained, as strengthening their cause—the king was compelled to submit to their demands; and the bishops bound Gaveston by a solemn oath never again to return to the kingdom under pain of excommunication.

The poor weak king, though he gave up his favourite for the time, still showed his folly to all the world. He endeavoured to soften the fall of Gaveston by accompanying him on his way towards the port. But instead of this port leading towards his own country, it proved to be Bristol, where it was soon discovered that he had only embarked for Ireland, over which Edward had appointed him Lord Lieutenant, with an establishment rivalling that of a king. Not only so, but before his departure, the infatuated monarch had actually bestowed fresh wealth and lands upon him both in England and Gascony. Gaveston, who really possessed much talent and learning, and might have made a distinguished and useful man, had he been employed by an able monarch, who would have called out his better, and kept in check his worst qualities, discharged his duties in Ireland as governor with vigour, repressed a rebellion there, and promoted order. But during the year he was absent his royal master was inconsolable, and never ceased labouring for his return. To this end he employed every means to conciliate the barons. He conferred on Lancaster the high office of hereditary steward; he flattered and promoted the earl of Lincoln, the father-in-law of Lancaster; he heaped grants, civilities, and promises on earl Warenne. Having thus prepared the way, he next applied for and obtained from the pope a dispensation for Gaveston from that oath which the barons had imposed, that he should for ever abjure the realm. With this he instantly recalled Gaveston from Ireland, and flew with joyful impatience to Chester to meet him on his way. There, on seeing him, he rushed into his arms with every extravagance of joy. He then applied to the parliament which had assembled at Stamford, for a formal permission to his re-establishmen in England, and, won over by the gifts an dflatteries of the king, they were equally weak, and allowed him to return.

All now in the court of the imbecile monarch was rejoicing and festivity. That court was filled by every species of mimes, players, musicians, and frivolous hangers-on. Scotland was all but lost; every day Bruce and his adherents, taking advantage of the neglect of this unhappy king, were coming forth more and more openly from their hiding places; taking fort after fort, and even daring to make devastating inroads into the northern lands of England. In other parts of the kingdom outrages, disorder, and violence abounded; but nothing could rouse the wretched king, or withdraw his attention from the court, which was filled with revelry and feasting, and the centre and soul of which was his beloved Gaveston. The people looked on and openly expressed their contempt for the favourite. They refused to call him anything but simply "that Piers Gaveston," which, incensing the foolish man, induced him to prevail on the king to put forth a proclamation commanding all men to give him his title of earl of Cornwall whensoever he was spoken of, which had only the effect of covering him with ridicule. The past experience was entirely lost on this thoughtless personage. No sooner was he freed from the consequences of his insults to the great barons and courtiers than he repeated them with fresh modes of offence. He laughed at and caricatured them amongst his worthless associates. He threw his gibes and sarcasms right and left, and let them fall with the vilest nicknames on the loftiest heads. The great earl of Lancaster was "the old hog," and "the stage-player;" the earl of Pembroke, a tall man of a pale aspect, was "Joseph the Jew;" the earl of Gloucester was "the cuckold's bird;" and the stern earl of Warwick "the black dog of Ardenne." Dearly did the vain favourite rue these galling epithets. The "black dog of Ardenne" swore a bitter oath that the miscreant should feel his teeth. The queen, more and more disgusted and incensed by the folly of the king, not only complained querulously to her father the king of France, but gave all encouragement to the angry nobles against the insolent Gaveston.

The riot at court had its necessary consequence — the dissipation of the royal funds and the need of more. The barons already, before voting supplies, had several times obliged the king to promise a redress of grievances. But now, on being summoned in October, 1309, three months after Gaveston's return, to meet at York, they refused, alleging fear of the all-powerful and vindictive favourite. The necessities of Edward made him imperatively renew the summons, but the barons still refused to assemble, and the object of the general odium was compelled to retire for the time. The barons then came together at Westminster in March of the following year, 1310; but they came fully armed, and Edward found himself completely in their power. They now insisted that he should sign a commission, enabling the parliament to appoint twelve persons, who should take the name of ordainers, having power thoroughly to reform both the government and the king's household. They were to enact ordinances for this purpose, which should for ever have the force of laws, and which, in truth, involved the whole authority of the crown and parliament. The committee, instead, however, of being confined to twelve, was extended to twenty-eight persons—seven bishops, eight earls, and

thirteen barons. This powerful body was authorised to form associations amongst themselves and their friends to enforce the strict observance of their ordinances; and all this was said to be for the glory of God, the security of the church, and the honour and advantage of the king and kingdom.

Thus had the imbecility of the king reduced the nation to the yoke of a baronial and ecclesiastical oligarchy. This suspicious junto, however, conscious that they would be regarded with a jealous eye by the nation, voluntarily signed a declaration that they owed these concessions to the king's free grace; that they should not be drawn into a precedent, nor allowed to trench on the royal prerogative; and that the functions and power of the ordainers should expire at the term of Michaelmas the year following.

The committee sat in London, and in the ensuing year, 1311, presented their ordinances to the king and parliament. Some of these ordinances were not only constitutional, but highly requisite, and tending to the due administration of the laws. They required sheriffs to be men of substance and standing; abolished the mischievous practice of issuing privy seals for the suspension of justice; restrained the practice of purveyance, where, under pretence of the king's service, enormous rapine and abuse were carried on; prohibited the alteration and debasement of the coin; made it illegal for foreigners to farm the revenues, ordering regular payment of taxes into the exchequer; revoked all the late grants of the crown, thus aiming a direct blow at the chief favourite, on whom the crown property had been most shamefully wasted. But the main grievance to the king was the sweeping ordinance against all evil counsellors, by which not only Piers Gaveston, but the whole tribe of sycophants and parasites were removed from their offices by name, and persons more agreeable to the barons were put in their places. It was moreover decreed that for the future all considerable offices, not only in the law, revenue, and military government, but of the household also—an especial and immemorial royal privilege—should be under the appointment of the baronage. Still farther, the power of making war, or even assembling his military tenants, should no longer be exercised by the king, without the consent of his nobility. This was a wholesale suppression of the prerogatives of the crown, which the barons dared not have attempted in any ordinary reign; but this would probably have little affected Edward had not Piers Gaveston been declared a public enemy, and banished from the realm, on pain of death in case of his ever daring to return.

Nothing can show more decisively that Edward was not merely weak, as it regarded his favourite, but was totally unfit to rule a kingdom, having no serious feeling of its rights or desire of its prosperity, than the fact that he signed all these deeply important decrees with a secret protest against them, meaning to break them on the first opportunity; that he sent Gaveston away to Flanders, intending as soon as possible to recall him, and the moment he was freed from the demands of parliament, he set out to the north of England, pretending a campaign against the Scots. Once at liberty, he recalled Gaveston, declared his punishment quite illegal, restored him to all his honours, employments, and estates, and the two dear friends continued at Berwick, and on the Scotch borders, doing nothing to resist the advances of Bruce.

The barons now broke all measures of restraint. Provoked to exasperation by seeing the whole of their labours at once set aside, and the ruinous favourite restored to his whole fortune in defiance of them, they united in a most formidable conspiracy. At the head of it appeared his old enemy Lancaster; Guy, earl of Warwick, "the black dog of Ardenne," entered into the alliance, according to one historian's expression, with "a furious and precipitate passion." Humphrey Bohun, earl of Hereford, the constable, the earl of Pembroke, and even the earl Warenne, who hitherto had supported, on most occasions, the royal cause, now joined zealously in the confederacy. Winchelsey, archbishop of Canterbury, led on the clergy, who declared themselves in a body against the king and Gaveston. Such a coalition was able, at that time, to shake the throne itself. Lancaster, at the head of an army, marched hastily to York, whence the king made a precipitate retreat to Newcastle. Lancaster made a keen pursuit, and Edward had only just time to get on board a vessel at Tynemouth, and escape to Scarborough with his minion. There Edward left him to defend the castle, while he again set out for York to endeavour to raise a body of troops. Aymer de Valence, earl of Pembroke, whom Gaveston had ridiculed as "Joseph the Jew," laid brisk siege to the castle, which was in bad condition, and Gaveston, on the 19th of May, 1312, was obliged to capitulate. Both Pembroke and lord Henry Percy pledged themselves that no harm should happen to him, and that he should be confined in his own castle of Wallingford. But, with all the boasts of chivalry, no great faith was to be reposed in such promises in those times, and they marched him away to the castle of Dedington, near Banbury, where Pembroke, on pretence of meeting his countess somewhere in the neighbourhood, left him under a feeble guard. Pembroke, who was under oath, having thus on plausible grounds retired, Warwick, "the black dog of Ardenne," who had vowed to show Gaveston his teeth, now appeared upon the scene. He made a show of attacking the castle, the garrison refused to defend it, no doubt, being well informed of the part they were to play, and in the morning the unhappy favourite was ordered suddenly to dress and descend into the court. There he found himself, to his consternation, in the presence of the grim and vengeful Warwick, accompanied by a strong force. By his orders he was set on a mule and led to Warwick castle with great triumph. His arrival there was announced by a burst of military music; great were the acclamations and triumph at seeing the long detested favourite thus in their power. A council was speedily formed, at which Lancaster, Hereford, Arundel, and other barons assisted. Some one ventured to propose gentle measures, and to shed no blood, but a voice from one of the party present exclaimed, "You have caught the fox; if you let him go you will have to hunt him again." That hint decided Gaveston's fate. The certainty that the king would on the first possible occasion reinstate his favourite, and that their own lives might fall before his vengeance, determined them to put him to death, in disgraceful violation of the articles of capitulation, but in accordance with the ordinance passed by parliament for his exile. Gaveston now stooped from his haughty insolence at the approach of death, and prayed for mercy from the earl of Lancaster. It was useless; his enemies hurried him away on the road towards Coventry, and there, at a

mile or more distant from the castle, on the 1st of July, 1312, they struck off his head on a rising ground called Blacklow Hill, where the Avon winds through a pleasant scene, suggestive of anything but such a tragedy.

The king, as was to be expected, was thrown into violent grief at the news of the bloody death of his beloved friend. He roused himself to something like energy; vowed deadly vengeance on all concerned, and proceeded to raise and march troops for the purpose. The barons stood in arms to receive him, and for the remainder of the year they maintained a hostile attitude, but fought no battle. The king's resentment, as evanescent as his better purposes, they might be led to chastise the Scots, and to win back, if possible, the brilliant conquests of Edward I.

For seven years the feeble and inglorious Edward II. had now suffered the loss of his great father's acquisitions in Scotland, and the reverses and disgraces of the English arms to remain unavenged. Occupied with the society of his favourite, the effeminate pleasures of the court, and the consequent contentions with his barons, he had allowed Bruce to proceed, with all the activity and resources of a great mind, to reassure the people of Scotland, retake the castles and forts, and strengthen himself at all points against attack. He had gradually risen from a condition

Edward II.

then gave way; the barons consented to solicit his pardon on their knees; and this pretended humility flattered him into compliance. The plate and jewels of Gaveston were surrendered into his hands, and he was implored to confirm their deeds by proclaiming the late favourite a traitor. Here, however, Edward stood firm; he not only refused, but declined also to confirm the ordinances they had passed. But they had accomplished the great object of destroying the hated favourite, and therefore were the more willing not to press the king too closely on other points. All classes in the nation now began to cherish hopes that the most perilous and enfeebled to one of great strength. His soldiers now held every stronghold except that of Stirling; and the governor of that last remaining fortress, by the permission of Bruce himself, appeared in London to inform the king that he had stipulated that if the castle were not relieved by the feast of St. John the Baptist, the 24th of June, it should be surrendered.

Thus the reign of this weak monarch was the rescue of Scotland. Had not this spiritless king interposed between two such monarchs as the Edwards first and third, it is impossible to suppose that Scotland could have maintained

SURPRISE OF EDINBURGH CASTLE.

its independence. But, with the golden opportunity of an incompetent enemy, Providence had also sent Scotland one of the greatest men which it ever produced. Robert Bruce, driven to seek refuge in the most inaccessible wilds and mountains during the dominion of Edward I., and even pursued there by some of his own countrymen, such as the lord of Lorn, and the relatives of the Red Comyn, no sooner saw the incapable ruler who had succeeded the "Hammer of Scotland," as Edward I. is styled on his tomb in Westminster Abbey, than he seized every favourable opportunity for regaining the castles and strongholds from the English. As fast as he mastered them he laid them in ruins, for he could not afford garrisons to defend them, and he knew that the feeling of the country was with him.

In the spring of 1308, the year following the death of Edward I., Bruce appeared to be sinking under the effects of the hardships and exposures which he had endured, combined with the almost superhuman exertions he had long made. He was in such a state of debility that his life was despaired of. Yet an English force under Mowbray, an Englishman, and John Comyn, count of Buchan, having approached Inverury, in Aberdeenshire, Bruce caused himself to be lifted from his bed, and held by two men on his horse, and in that condition charged and routed his enemies. What might not be expected from resolution like that! Castle after castle fell into his hands. Aberdeen and Forfar were surprised the same year and razed. In 1309 and 1310 truces were entered into, but badly kept on both sides. In the autumn of that year Edward made an expedition into Scotland, but could not find an enemy; Bruce and his followers having adroitly disappeared, and, as Edward described it in a letter to the pope, hidden themselves after the manner of foxes. But no sooner had Edward returned to London the following July, than Bruce actually pursued in the track of his army, and laid waste Durham. Returning laden with spoil, he next besieged and took Perth in January, 1312. He then made another excursion into the north of England, burned the towns of Corbridge and Hexham, in Northumberland; afterwards destroyed a great part of the city of Durham; then marched upon Chester and Carlisle, and was only induced to return to his own country by a payment of £8,000, raised in the four northern counties.

On the 7th of March of that year the important castle of Roxburgh was taken by lord James Douglas by surprise. This was the same James Douglas who in 1307 had surprised his own castle of Douglas, which was held by Lord Clifford. He had contrived to get in on Palm Sunday when the soldiers were in church. Having cut them to pieces, he and his followers found only a few soldiers in the castle cooking the dinner. They ate the dinner, and finding great stores for the garrison, threw them on a heap in the middle of the floor, knocked out the heads the wine barrels, slew the soldiers, flung them on the pile, and so set fire to the castle, casting dead horses into the well to spoil it. The castle being restored by the English, Douglas again took and destroyed it, and vowed that he would thus avenge himself on any one who took possession of his house. There is a romantic but true story of a great and very beautiful heiress in England, who told her lovers that she would accept the man who would defend this castle of Douglas, now called Perilous Castle. This enterprise a brave young officer, Sir John Wilton, undertook, and maintained the castle for some time, but at length was lured out by a stratagem of Douglas and slain, a letter to the lady being found in his pocket.

The manner in which Douglas surprised several of the most formidable castles of Scotland has all the wonder of romance about it. The castle of Roxburgh, which now fell into his hands, was only five miles from the English border, numerously garrisoned, and vigilantly watched, from the surprising successes of the Scots of late against such places, and Douglas was known to be in the neighbourhood. It was a holiday again, as at Douglas Castle; not now Palm Sunday, but Shrovetide. The soldiers were carousing, but had taken care to set watches on the battlements.

An Englishwoman, the wife of one of the officers, was sitting on the battlement with her child in her arms. She was looking out over the fields below, when she saw some black objects creeping along near the foot of the tower. The sentinel to whom she pointed them out, said, "Pooh, they are only black cattle." So the lady sat still, and in a while began to sing to her child:—

"Hush ye, hush ye, little pet ye;
Hush ye, hush ye, do not fret ye;
The Black Douglas shall not get ye."

"You are not so sure of that," said a voice close beside her; and at the same time she felt her arm grasped by an iron glove, and, looking round in affright, she saw a tall, dark, powerful man—the Black Douglas himself. Another man was at the moment coming over the wall near the sentinel; this was one Simon Ledehouse. The sentinel perceiving him, rushed at him with his lance, at the same time shouting an alarm. Ledehouse put aside the lance, and struck down the sentinel with his dagger. The Scots now came pouring pell-mell over the walls, and the castle was taken; but the Douglas protected the woman and child.

Still more remarkable was the surprise of the castle of Edinburgh only a week afterwards. Any one who has seen the lofty precipice on which this castle was situated would regard the scaling of that cliff as next to impossible, especially while a strong garrison was watching above. Yet this was done by Thomas Randolph—that same Randolph, the nephew of Bruce, who was taken prisoner at the battle of Methven, and who had now become earl of Moray, and afterwards was regent of the kingdom. Randolph was informed by a man of the name of Francis that, in his youth, he had frequently descended, when a soldier in the garrison, by a secret path, to visit a girl that he was in love with in the Grass-market. He offered to show Randolph the way, who at once resolved to make the attempt, though a more perilous one could not be conceived, for if discovered by the garrison above while ascending the cliff, not a man of them would be left alive.

The brave Randolph selected thirty men for the enterprise, and came to the foot of the cliff on a dark night. Francis led the way; and a perilous way they found it; a path, says Sir Walter Scott, fitter for a cat than a man. A falling stone, or a word uttered, would have alarmed the watchmen, and brought instant destruction upon them. They, therefore, were obliged to creep on with the utmost caution; and when they had nearly reached the castle-wall they could hear the guards going their rounds, and were obliged to lie close to escape attention. And here they were startled by a man suddenly throwing

a stone from the wall, and crying out, "Aha! I see you well." They believed they were discovered, but lay firm and close, while the stone thundered down over their heads, and passed on. One movement, and they had been utterly destroyed, for the guard, only by throwing stones down, must have killed every one of them. But they were chosen as men who were prepared for anything. They lay quiet as the rocks themselves: the English soldier, as it proved, only did it in joke to alarm his comrades, and they, knowing that, all passed on. Then Randolph and his brave men, headed by Francis their guide—who proved himself a stout soldier—and Sir Andrew Grey, speedily fixed their scaling ladders to the walls, which at that place were only about twice a man's height, were over, and very easily destroyed the garrison, who, except the sentinels, were asleep and unarmed.

By such daring courage, and by a variety of stratagems, the strongest castles fell rapidly into their hands. Dumfries, Butel, Dalswinton, and Linlithgow swelled the list. The last was taken by the assistance of a farmer of the name of Binnock, or Binny, who used to supply the garrison with hay. This man concerted with the soldiers, his countrymen, that he should cut his *soame*—a yoke which fastened the horses to the cart—just as his loaded cart was in the gateway, and then crying, "Call all, call all!" the soldiers should rush in, as they did.

While Douglas, Randolph, and their heroic compeers were thus performing the most surprising feats of daring and of heroism, Bruce, who had now an effective army, marched to every point of the country where the enemy was to be found, defeating and chasing them away. He did not neglect to make a visit to the north, to the country of the Comyns, who had pursued him with peculiar animosity on account of his killing their relative, the Red Comyn, and who had joined the English with all their forces. Robert Bruce now ravaged their district, and slew them remorselessly, as the enemies of their country, causing more than thirty of them to be beheaded in one day, and thrown into a pit, called ever after "The grave of the headless Comyns." Neither did he forget John of Lorn, who had joined with the Comyns and the English, and had hunted him with bloodhounds. He penetrated into the very heart of Argyll, Lorn's country, beset him in the mountains, and was very near securing Lorn himself. He managed with difficulty to escape in a boat; but king Robert did not suffer his country to escape, for he bestowed a large portion of it on his own nephew, Sir Colin Campbell, and thus founded the great ducal family of Argyll.

Thus it came at last to the pass that, as we have described, the English had only the castle of Stirling left in all Scotland; and Sir Philip Mowbray, after a brave defence, had agreed to deliver that up if not relieved by a certain day. He had, as we have said, arrived in London with this message. Perhaps even such a message as this, full of national disgrace, might not have moved Edward out of his epicurean listlessness, but it aroused the nobles. They exclaimed unanimously that it would be an eternal shame thus to let the great conquest of Edward I. fall out of their hands without a blow. It was therefore resolved that the king should lead an army to the rescue.

A royal summons was issued for all the military force of England to meet the king at Berwick on the 11th of June, 1314. The most warlike of the British subjects from the French provinces were called forth; troops were enlisted in Flanders; the Irish and Welsh were tempted in great numbers to Edward's standard by hopes of plunder; and altogether an army of not less than one hundred thousand men, including forty thousand cavalry—three thousand of whom, men and horse, were clad in complete armour—assembled. A large fleet attended to act in concert with the army; and at the head of this mighty force the king took his way towards Edinburgh, advancing along the east coast, and thence along the right bank of the Forth to Stirling.

Robert Bruce, who had been lying before Stirling awaiting the result of Sir Philip Mowbray's mission to London, now saw that the fate of the kingdom must be decided on or near that spot. His army was much inferior to the English one in numbers, amounting to between thirty and forty thousand men. But then they were tried troops, fighting for the very existence of their country, and under such leaders as Robert Bruce, Randolph, and Douglas—men whom they had followed into exploits almost miraculous. The English army was far better armed and provided, except in one particular, and that the most essential of all—a commander. Instead of that—instead of a man of courage, experience, and sagacity, they had a timid, effeminate puppet; and where so much depended on the commander-in-chief—even more than at the present day—that single circumstance was fatal.

Bruce made preparations for the decisive struggle with his usual ability. He had collected his forces in the forest called Torwood; but, as he knew the superiority of the English, not merely in numbers, but in their heavy-armed cavalry (far better mounted and equipped than his own) and in their archers (the very best in the world), he determined to provide against these advantages. He therefore led his army into a plain on the south side of Stirling, called the New Park, close beneath which the English army would be obliged to pass through a swampy country, broken up with watercourses, while the Scots stood on firm, dry ground. With this morass in front, and the deep, woody, and broken banks of the little rivulet of Bannockburn on his right, so rocky that no troops could pass them, he took care to secure the more assailable ground on his left by digging a great number of pits, about knee-deep, which he covered with brushwood, and over that with turf, so as to look like solid grassy ground. In these pits he is said by some writers to have fixed pointed stakes. The whole ground, says Barbour, the poetical chronicler, was like a honeycomb with the holes. Besides this, Bruce sought to disable the English cavalry by sowing the front of the battle-field with those cruel three-pointed steel spikes called caltrops and crow-feet, which lamed and disabled the horses which trod upon them.

Bruce then divided his forces into four divisions. Of these he gave the command of the right wing, flanked by the Bannockburn, to his brother Edward; of the left, near Stirling, to Randolph, who was posted near the church of St. Ninians, and had orders at all risks to prevent the English throwing succours into the city: Sir James Douglas and Walter the Steward commanded the centre; and Bruce headed the reserve in the rear, consisting of the men of Argyll, the islanders, and his own vassals of Carrick.

Douglas and Sir Robert Keith, mareschal of the Scottish

army, were despatched by king Robert to take a view of the English forces, now approaching from Falkirk. They returned saying the vast host approaching was one of the most beautiful and terrible sights imaginable; that the whole country appeared covered with moving troops; and that the number of banners, pennons, standards, flags, all of different kinds, made so gallant a show, that the bravest and most numerous army in Christendom might be alarmed to behold it coming against them. It was Sunday, and Barbour describes it as so bright that the armour of the English troops made the country seem all on fire. Never had England sent forth a more magnificent host, and never did one approach the battle-field with more imposing aspect; but the lion-heart of the army, the terrible "Hammer of Scotland," was no longer there.

As the army drew in sight Edward sent forward Lord Clifford with eight hundred horse to endeavour to gain the castle by a circuitous route, hidden by rising grounds from Bruce's left wing. They had already passed the Scottish line when Bruce was the first to descry them. "See, Randolph," he cried, riding up to him, "there is a rose fallen from your chaplet—you have suffered the enemy to pass!" Randolph made no reply, but rushed upon Clifford, with little more than half his number. The English wheeled round to charge and to encompass the little band of Scots, but Randolph drew them up back to back, and they defended themselves valiantly. Douglas, who saw the perilous position of Randolph, asked to be allowed to ride up to his relief. "No," replied the king, "let Randolph redeem his own fault." But the danger became so imminent, that Douglas exclaimed, "So please you, my liege, I must aid Randolph; I cannot stand idle and see him perish." He therefore rode off with a strong detachment, but seeing, as he drew near, that the English were giving way, he cried, "Halt! Randolph has gained the day: let us not lessen his glory by approaching the field." A noble sentiment, for Randolph and Douglas were always striving which should rise the highest in the nation.

Meanwhile, the van of the English army approached the front of the Scottish host; and they beheld king Robert mounted on a small palfrey instead of his great war-horse, for he did not expect the battle that evening. He was riding up and down the ranks of his men, putting them in order, with a steel battle-axe in his hand, and a helmet on his head surmounted with a crown of gold. Some of the bravest knights of the English army rode out in front, to see what the Scots were doing; and Bruce also advanced a little before his own men to take a nearer view of them. Sir Henry Bohun, an English knight, mounted on a heavy war-horse, armed at all points, thought this an excellent opportunity to earn great renown, and put an end to the war at a stroke, by killing Robert Bruce. He therefore charged furiously upon him, trusting with his lance to bear him to the ground, poorly mounted as he was. King Robert awaited him with the most profound composure; and, as he drew near, suddenly turned his pony aside, so that Bohun missed him with the point of his lance, and was in the act of being carried past him by his horse. Robert Bruce, rising in his stirrups as the knight was passing, dealt him such a blow on the head with his battle-axe, that it broke to pieces his iron helmet as if it had been a nutshell, and hurled him dead to the ground. The English knights, astonished at the act, retired to the main body; and king Robert's friends blamed him for exposing himself and the safety of the army to such risks; but he himself only continued to look at his weapon, saying, "I have broken my good battle-axe."

The next morning the battle began in terrible earnest. The English as they approached saw the abbot of Inchaffray walking barefoot through the Scottish ranks, and exhorting the soldiers to fight bravely for their freedom. As he passed they knelt and prayed for victory. King Edward, seeing this, cried out, "See! they kneel down; they are asking forgiveness!" "Yes," replied the bold baron Ingelram de Umphraville; "but they ask it of God, not of us; these men will conquer or die upon the field."

The main body of the army, under the conduct of the king himself, advanced in a long dense column upon the Scottish line; but they failed to break it by the shock, and repeated renewals of the charge told more sensibly on the assailants than on the assailed. The English were broken at every fresh collision; the Scots stood like a range of rocks. Every part of the Scottish army was brought into play, while the majority of the English never came in contact with the enemy. The brave Randolph led up the left wing to the support of the assaulted centre, till he appeared surrounded and lost in an ocean of foes. On the other hand, the earls of Hereford and Gloucester made a fierce charge of cavalry on the right wing, commanded by Edward Bruce, but were received by those treacherous pit-falls, in which their horses were overthrown in confusion, and the riders, falling in their heavy armour, were unable to extricate themselves. Dreadful then was the slaughter; and amongst the rest Gloucester, the king's nephew, not wearing his armorial bearings, and not, therefore, being recognised, was cut to pieces in the *mêlée*.

The English archers poured their arrows thick as hail upon the main body, and might, as at Falkirk, have decided the day; but Bruce, having calculated on this, sent Sir Robert Keith, the mareschal, with a small body of horse, to take them in flank; and as the archers had no weapons for close quarters, the Scottish horsemen, dashing headlong among them, cut them down in great numbers, and threw them into total confusion.

Meanwhile Douglas and the Steward encouraged their men in the centre by their valiant deeds and the confidence in their great fame, and the battle became general along the whole Scottish line. The moment in which Bruce saw that his detachment of horse had disordered the archers, he advanced with his reserve, and the whole Scotch front pressed upon the already hesitating English. At this critical moment an event occurred which decided the victory. Bruce had posted the servants and attendants of the Scottish camp behind a hill in the rear of the army. Some writers give him credit for planning what took place, and assert that he had furnished them for that purpose with banners, to represent a second army. Others, and amongst them Sir Walter Scott, attribute the appearance of these men simply to observing that their army was evidently gaining on the foe, and were therefore eager to have their share of the victory and the booty. Be this as it may, suddenly the English saw a body of men coming rapidly over the hill, ever since called the Gillies', or servants' Hill, from this circumstance. Supposing this to be a fre. army, they at once lost heart and broke, while Bruce, raising his war-cry, rushed with new fury against the fail-

ing ranks. The king was the first to put spurs to his horse and fly. A valiant knight, Sir Giles de Argentine, who had won great renown in Palestine, assisted the king out of the press; but he then turned, saying, "It is not my custom to fly"—a keen reproof to the cowardly monarch, if he could have felt anything but fear—and dashing, with the cry of "Argentine! Argentine!" into the thickest of the Scottish ranks, was killed.

The fugitive king fled to the gates of Stirling castle, and entreated admittance; but the brave Sir Philip Mowbray reminding him that he was pledged to surrender the castle if it were not relieved that very day, Edward was obliged to fly through the Torwood. Douglas was already pressing hotly after him; and meeting with Sir Lawrence Abernethy, a Scottish knight hitherto in the English interest, and even now on his way to the English army,—he carried the not unwilling knight and his twenty horsemen along with him. Douglas and Abernethy pursued the king at full gallop, and never ceased the chase till they reached Dunbar, sixty miles off, where Edward narrowly escaped into the castle, still held by an English ally, Patrick, earl of March. Thence the king escaped by a small fishing skiff to England, leaving his splendid army, a great part of it to utter destruction. Fifty thousand of the English were said to have been killed or taken prisoners, and the remnant of the army was pursued as far as Berwick, ninety miles distant. Of those who fell there have been said to be twenty-seven barons and bannerets, including Gloucester, a prince of the blood, 200 knights, 700 esquires, and 30,000 of inferior rank. Twenty-two barons and bannerets were taken, and sixty knights; and an English historian has asserted, that if the chariots, baggage wagons, &c., that were taken, loaded with military stores and booty, had been drawn out in single line, they would have reached sixty leagues. Besides this, the ransom of so many distinguished men was a grand source of wealth to the victorious army. The losses of the Scotch were comparatively trivial, Sir William Vipont and Sir William Ross being the only persons of note slain.

Such was the decisive battle of Bannockburn, which has ever since been celebrated in song and story as one of the proudest triumphs in Scottish history. It at once established the independence of Scotland. "The English," says Sir Walter Scott, "never before or afterwards, whether in France or Scotland, lost so dreadful a battle as that of Bannockburn, nor did the Scots ever gain one of the same importance." Bruce was at once elevated from the condition of an exile, hunted by his enemies with bloodhounds like a beast of the chase, and placed firmly on the throne of his native land; one of the wisest and bravest kings who ever sat there. The moral effect of this battle was almost magical. Stirling castle was at once surrendered, according to stipulation. Bothwell castle, in which the earl of Hereford had shut himself up, soon after yielded to Edward Bruce, and Hereford was exchanged for the wife, sister, and daughter of the king of Scots, who had been detained eight years in England, as well as for the bishop of Glasgow and the earl of Mar. The triumphant Scots marched into England, ravaged Northumberland, levied tribute on Durham, wasted the country to the very gates of York, and going westward, reached Appleby in Westmoreland, whence they returned home laden with spoil. The English were become thoroughly demoralised by their great overthrow, and numbers fled at the approach of the merest handful of Scots. "O day of vengeance and of misfortune," says the monk of Malmesburg; "day of disgrace and perdition! unworthy to be included in the circle of the year, which tarnished the fame of England, and enriched the Scots with the plunder of the precious stuffs of our nation to the extent of two hundred thousand pounds,"—nearly three millions of our money.

Encouraged by this panic, the Scots made fresh incursions that autumn and the following summer, but received, ultimately, some checks at Carlisle and Berwick. But, perhaps, more than from this, the security of England was purchased by the ill-fortune of Ireland; for in May, 1315, the Irish, taking also advantage of the reverses of England, invited Edward Bruce to come over, drive out the English, and become their king. Edward Bruce caught at the offer with avidity, for he was fond of battle and adventure, and ambitious of fame and power. He was brave but rash. He took over six thousand men, and was joined by several of the Irish chiefs on landing at Carrickfergus. The Scots fought with various success, and penetrated far into Ireland. In the following spring Edward Bruce was crowned king of Ireland in Ulster, and Robert Bruce also went over to support his claim with fresh forces, making the Scottish army about 20,000 men. For another year the two brothers continued their adventure, marching on Dublin, to which the citizens set fire, and laid waste the suburbs, so that they were obliged to move on. They marched south in hope of receiving co-operation from the Irish of Munster and Connaught, but were disappointed, and involved in imminent danger from an English army of 30,000 men at Kilkenny.

The English, meantime, seized the opportunity of the absence of the king of Scots, and made fresh inroads into Scotland. This compelled his speedy return, when, in March, 1318, he made himself master of Berwick, and revenged himself on the English by again marching into their northern counties, taking the castles of Wark, Harbottle, and Mitford in Northumberland; and in a second raid in Yorkshire, burning Northallerton, Boroughbridge, Scarborough, and Skipton, besides levying 1,000 marks on Ripon, and carrying off much booty. But ill-fortune soon overtook his brother Edward in Ireland, where he had left him. He engaged Sir Piers de Birmingham at Fagher, near Dundalk, and was left dead on the field, with two thousand of his soldiers. The efforts of the Scots for three years to erect a kingdom in Ireland thus vanished for ever, leaving scarcely a trace. Sir Piers Birmingham presented the head of Edward Bruce to the king of England, who made him in recompense earl of Louth.

These reverses of the Scots excited Edward of Caernarvon to one more effort for the recovery of Scotland. He assembled a numerous force, and besieged Berwick on the 7th of September, 1319, both by sea and land. It made a vigorous resistance; and Randolph and Douglas, to create a diversion, invaded the western marches with a force of 15,000 men. They made a push for York to secure the queen, but failed. They then committed dreadful ravages in Yorkshire, and were encountered by an undisciplined mob led on by the archbishop of York and the bishop of Ely. This rude assemblage they routed at Mitton, on the Swale, and slew about 4,000, chiefly peasants, but amongst them 300 churchmen with surplices over their armour:

whence this battle, in allusion to so many shaven crowns in it, was called the Chapter of Mitton. Edward at length raised the siege of Berwick, and marched to intercept the Scots, but not before they had burnt and destroyed eighty-four towns and villages, and done incredible damage. On the approach of the king they warily withdrew, and finished their successful raid by a truce for two years.

CHAPTER LXII.

Edward II. continued—Edward's new Favourite, De Spenser—War in consequence with the Barons—Lancaster beheaded—Queen Isabella and Mortimer—The Queen commences War against her Husband—The Fall of the Spensers—The King dethroned—His dreadful Death—Destruction of the Templars.

Such had been the fortune in war of the son of one of the greatest commanders that the English ever saw on the throne; such was the condition to which the weakness and cowardice of Edward II. had reduced the kingdom. The Scots insulted and harassed him on one side, the Welsh on the other; and the haughty barons, taking advantage of his fallen fortunes, sought to raise their own power on the ruins of the throne. They came forward again boldly with their ordinances, and Edward was compelled to submit to them. Lancaster was set at the head of the council, and introduced a totally new set of officers of the crown. The government offices, they declared, should be filled from time to time by the votes of parliament; that is, of the barons. So far from these new rulers endeavouring to expel or humble the Scots, it was believed that Lancaster was in secret alliance with them; and this afterwards was proved to be true. Acting this traitorous part, Lancaster pretended to keep up a hostile show against the Scots, but he took care that all attempts against them should fail.

Edward was clearly totally unfit to govern a kingdom. He had neither abilities to conduct the affairs of peace or war; and he was of that unhappy character of mind which never derives any benefit from experience. The misery which he had brought upon himself by his foolish fondness for Gaveston, and the destruction brought upon the favourite himself, had not the least effect in preventing him falling into the same error. Soon after the death of Gaveston he conceived the same singular and indomitable attachment to Hugh le Despenser, or Spenser; a young man of ancient descent, and in the service of the earl of Lancaster, who, in his changes of office, had placed him about the court. This second fatal attachment involved the remainder of the reign of Edward in perpetual strife and trouble, and precipitated his terrible end.

This young Despenser, the new favourite, had all the graces of person and the accomplishments which had bewitched the king in Gaveston, but he had advantages which never belonged to the Gascon,—those of birth, rank, and connection. His father was a nobleman of ability and experience, highly esteemed for his wisdom, bravery, and integrity through his past life. But these things availed nothing with the indignant barons, who suddenly saw the young man and his father advanced over their heads. They withdrew sullenly from court and parliament, and sought an opportunity to make their resentment felt by both the king and his minions. This opportunity, with a monarch like Edward, could not be long wanting. He began the same reckless course of heaping honours and estates on the younger Spenser. As he had married Gaveston to his own niece, sister to the earl of Gloucester, he now repeated the very act as nearly as circumstances would permit him, and married Spenser to the sister and one of the co-heirs of the late earl of Gloucester, who was killed at Bannockburn. He thus put him, in his wife's right, in possession of vast estates, including the county of Glamorgan and part of the Welsh marches. The father also obtained great possessions, for, in spite of his reputation for wisdom, his sudden advancement to such large opportunity appeared to have awakened in him a boundless rapacity. The king immediately followed up these gifts by seizing, at the instigation of young Spenser, on the barony of Gower, left to John de Mowbray, on the plea that it had reverted to the crown through Mowbray's neglect of feudal usage on entering into possession. This was exactly the sort of occasion for which the barons were on the watch; the whole marches were on flame; civil war was on foot. The earls of Lancaster and Hereford flew to arms. Audley, the two Rogers de Mortimer, Roger de Clifford, and many others, disgusted, for private reasons, with the Spensers, joined them. The lords of the marches sent a message to the king, demanding the instant banishment or imprisonment of the young favourite, threatening to renounce their allegiance, and to punish the minister themselves. Scarcely waiting for an answer, they fell on the lands of both the Spensers, pillaged and wasted their estates, murdered their servants, drove away their cattle, and burned down their castles. Lancaster having joined them, with thirty-four barons and a host of vassals, this formidable force marched to St. Albans. Having bound themselves not to lay down their arms till they had driven the two Spensers from the kingdom, they sent a united demand to the king for this object. Edward assumed constitutional grounds for his objection to this demand. The two Spensers were absent,—the father abroad, the son at sea; and the king declared that he was restrained by his coronation oath from violating the laws and condemning persons unheard. Timid at the head of an army, Edward was always bold in defence of his favourites. These pretences weighed little with men with arms in their hands. They marched on London, occupied the suburbs of Holborn and Clerkenwell; and a parliament having assembled at Westminster, these armed remonstrants delivered in a charge against the two Spensers of usurping the royal powers, of alienating the mind of the king from his nobles, of exacting fines, and appointing ignorant judges. By menaces and violence they carried their point, obtaining a sentence of attainder and perpetual banishment against the two obnoxious courtiers. This sentence was pronounced by the barons alone, for the commons were not even consulted, and the bishops protested against so illegal a proceeding. The only evidence which these turbulent barons gave of their remembrance of the laws, was in requiring from the king a deed of indemnity for their conduct; and having got this, they disbanded their army, and retired, highly delighted with their success, and in perfect security, as they imagined, to their castles.

But they had in reality been too successful. The force put upon the authority of the king was so outrageous, and it reduced all respect for it to so low an ebb, that the barons and knights in their own neighbourhoods became totally regardless of public decorum towards the royal family. Even the queen, who had always endeavoured to live on good terms with the barons, and who detested the

THE BATTLE OF BANNOCKBURN. (See page 346.)

young Spenser as cordially as they did, could not escape insult. Passing the castle of Leeds, in Kent, in reality a crown property, but in the keeping of the lord of Badlesmere, she desired to spend the night there, but admittance was refused her; and, some of her attendants insisting on their royal mistress being admitted to what might be called her own house, were forcibly repulsed and killed. The queen instantly complained, with all her quick sense of indignity, to the king; and Edward thought that now he had a splendid opportunity of vengeance on his haughty barons. He for once assumed courage, and displayed a spirit which, if it had been permanent and uniform, would have made him and kept him master of his throne and prerogatives. He assembled an army, fell on Badlesmere, took him prisoner, and inflicted severe chastisement on his followers. The insult to the queen had excited the indignation of the people against the barons, and completely justified the proceedings of the king. Thus suddenly finding himself on the high tide of public approbation, he at once declared the acts of the barons void, and contrary to the tenor of the great charter. He showed surprising activity in collecting forces and calling out friends in different parts of the kingdom. He recalled the two Spensers. They had been only banished in the month of August; in October they were again on English ground. The king marched down upon the quarters of the lords of the marches, who were thus suddenly taken at unawares, were isolated in fancied security, and incapable of resistance. He seized and hanged twelve knights of that party. Many of the barons endeavoured to appease him by submission, but their castles were taken possession of, and their persons imprisoned.

Lancaster, alarmed for his safety, hastened northward, and now openly avowed his league with Scotland so long suspected, and called on the Scots for help. This was promised him under the command of the two great champions of Scotland, Randolph, now earl of Moray, and the Douglas. But these not arriving, Lancaster set out on his march, and was joined by the earl of Hereford and all his forces. Their army, however, did not equal that of the king, which numbered 30,000 men.

Lancaster and Hereford posted themselves at Burton-upon-Trent, hoping to keep back the royal forces by obstructing the passage over the bridge: but in this they failed, and hastily retreated northwards, hoping daily for the arrival of the promised aid from Scotland. At Boroughbridge, on the 16th of March, 1323, they were intercepted by a force under Sir Simon Ward and Sir Andrew Harclay, who occupied the bridge and the opposite banks of the river. In fear of the pursuit of the king's army, the two barons endeavoured to force the bridge, but were stoutly repulsed; Hereford was killed, and Lancaster, who in his terror had lost all power of commanding his troops, was seized and conducted to the king.

No greater contrast could be exhibited by two commanders than was exhibited on this occasion by Hereford and Lancaster. Hereford, determined to force the bridge, charged on foot; but a Welshman, who had discovered that the bridge was in a very decayed state, and full of holes, had concealed himself under it, and through one of these holes he thrust a spear into the bowels of the brave earl, who fell dead on the spot. Lancaster attempted to find a ford over the river, but the archers of the enemy poured in showers of arrows upon him. Night put a stop to the battle, and in the morning he was taken. Lancaster had in his day a great reputation for piety. "He was," says Froissart, "a wise man and a holy; and he did afterwards many fine miracles on the spot where he was beheaded." Hume has painted this nobleman as violent, turbulent, and hypocritical; and attributes his reputation for piety to the monks, whom he favoured, and who were his historians. But there is nothing in his public conduct which may not assume the character of patriotism, for he fell, as he had lived, in endeavouring to resist the mischievous practices of the king in regard to his favourites. He was a prince of the blood; and by his position and the rights of the charter bound to support the constitution which the king was continually violating in his unbounded partiality to his minions. In conformity with his character, Lancaster, on being surrounded, retired into a chapel, and looking on the holy cross, said, "Good Lord, I surrender myself to thee, and put me into thy mercy." He had no mercy to expect from Edward, who remembered too well the indignities which his beloved Gaveston had received at the hands of the earl and his associates at his execution, and who now resolved to have ample revenge.

About a month after the battle, he convoked a court marshal at the earl's own castle of Pontefract, where he himself presided, and where as a traitor, having made league with Scotland against his rightful sovereign, Lancaster was condemned to be hanged, drawn, and quartered. He was clothed in mean attire, set upon a sorry jade of a horse, with a hood upon his head, and in this manner he was led to execution on a hill near the castle; the king's officers heaping all kinds of insults upon him, and the populace, whom he had greatly incensed by his calling in the Scots, pelting him with mud, and attending him with outcries and curses. In his life and death Lancaster bore a striking resemblance to the earl of Leicester, the leader of the barons in the reign of Henry III.

Besides the two leaders of this revolt, five knights and three esquires were killed in the battle, and fourteen bannerets and fourteen knights bachelors were hanged, drawn, and quartered. Amongst those who were executed were Badlesmere, who had insulted the queen, Gifford, Barnet, Cheney, and Fleming. Many were thrown into prison, and others escaped beyond the sea. "Never," says an old writer, "did English earth at one time drink so much blood of her nobles, in so vile a manner shed as this." But not only was this vengeance taken on the persons of the insurgents, their vast estates were forfeited to the crown, and the people soon beheld with inexpressible indignation the greater portion of these immense demesnes seized upon by the younger Spenser, whose rapacity was insatiable. In a parliament held at York the attainder of the Despensers was reversed, the father was created earl of Winchester, and both he and his son enriched by the lands of the fallen nobles. Edward was as totally uncured of his folly as ever. Harclay for his services received the earldom of Carlisle and a large estate, which he soon again forfeited, as well as his life, for a treasonable correspondence with the Scots. But the rest of the barons of the royal party receiving little, were the more incensed at the immense spoils heaped on the Spensers. The king's enemies, on the other hand, vowed vengeance on both monarch and favourite, and the people

regarded him with more determined envy and hatred than ever.

Thus Edward, falling the moment that he was successful into his hopeless failing of favoritism, not only lost every advantage he had so completely gained, but hastened by it the day of retribution. The nobles who had escaped to France, there set on foot a dangerous conspiracy. Amongst these was the younger Roger Mortimer, one of the most powerful barons of the Welsh marches, who had been twice condemned for high treason, but receiving a pardon for his life, was detained in the Tower, where his captivity was intended to be perpetual. Making his guards drunk with a drugged liquor, he escaped, and now joined these conspirators, all smarting from their sufferings on account of the favourite, and many of them from his usurpation of their castles and lands.

Everything favoured these conspirators. At home, the young Spenser, as little instructed by past dangers as his master, seemed to grow every day more arrogant; and an expedition against the Scots, like all the expeditions of this king against that people, proving a failure, followed by the usual inroads of the Scots, in one of which they nearly took the king prisoner, and in which they wasted the country to the very walls of York, created deep discontent and national irritation. Sensible of the lowering aspect of things in France, Edward, at length, after a war of three and twenty years, fruitful in disaster and ruin, now concluded a truce with Scotland for thirteen years. In this truce he did not recognise the title of Robert Bruce to the crown; but Bruce, who had made good his claim to it, who had repelled all the attacks of England on his country, given it a great overthrow at Bannockburn, and on various occasions carried the war into England, satisfied himself with these substantial advantages.

Fortified on this side, Edward still did not sit secure. Soon after the treaty he was startled by a plot to cut off the elder Spenser, and then by an attempt to release the prisoners taken at Boroughbridge from their dungeons. This failed; but the conspiracy in France grew, and circumstances favoured it. Charles le Bel, the brother of Edward's queen, now on the throne, having, or pretending, causes of complaint against Edward's officers in the province of Guienne, overran that province with his arms, and took many of his castles. Edward apologised, and offered to refer the causes of quarrel to the pope; but Charles took advantage of his brother-in-law's difficulties, and endeavoured to deprive him of his French territories altogether. Edward sent out his brother, the earl of Kent, to endeavour to negotiate matters, but without effect; and Isabella, who had long wished to quit the kingdom, now prevailed on the king to let her go over and endeavour to arrange the business with her brother. Edward fell into the snare: the queen found herself in Paris, and the centre of a powerful band of the British malcontents. One common principle animated the queen and the refugees of the Lancaster faction, and bound them together—hatred of the Spensers. The queen had come attended by a splendid retinue—for she came not only as queen of England and princess of France, but in the character of an ambassador. Publicly, therefore, she was received with every honour; and, publicly, she appeared to be negotiating for a settlement of her royal husband's difficulties. But as the mode of solving them she conceded that he should come over in person and do homage for his provinces. This proposal, which astonished both the king and the whole court, was strenuously resisted by the younger Spenser. He well knew the feelings entertained by the queen towards himself; and therefore would, on no account, trust himself in Paris with her. But to allow the king to proceed there alone was as full of danger. The king might there fall under the influence of some other person; and at home his own position would be a most dangerous one during the king's absence, surrounded as he was by universal hatred.

The king had advanced as far as Dover, where, no doubt, at the persuasion of the Spensers, he stopped, and, on the plea of illness, declined to proceed any further. Foiled in this scheme, Isabella hit upon another, which was that Edward should make over Guienne and Ponthieu to his son, who then could go instead of his father, and perform the requisite homage. This was more easily fallen into by the king, because it suited young Spenser by keeping the king at home. Edward resigned Guienne and Ponthieu to his son, now thirteen years old; he went over, did his homage, and took up his residence with his mother.

The plot now began to unfold itself palpably. The queen was not only surrounded by a powerful body of English subjects hostile to their king, but she had the heir to the throne in her possession, and she determined never to return to England till she could drive young Spenser thence, and seize the reins of power herself. When, therefore, the homage being completed, Edward urged the return of his wife and son, he received at first evasive answers, which were soon followed by the foulest charges against him by his own queen. She complained that Hugh Spenser had alienated the king's affection from her; that he had sown continual discord between them; had brought the king to such a feeling against her, that he would neither see her nor come where she was. She accused the Spensers of seizing her dower, and keeping her in a state of abject poverty and dependence, and that, beyond all this, they had a design on the lives of both herself and son. The king put forth a defence of himself, but nothing could clear him from the charge of having grossly neglected the queen for his favourites, or of having most thoroughly merited her contempt and aversion.

But while the queen was doing the utmost to disgrace and ruin her husband, her own conduct was notoriously scandalous. During the life of the earl of Lancaster, she appears to have leaned very much on him for counsel and support; but now the lord Mortimer was become the head of the Lancastrian party, and therefore necessarily was thrown daily into her society. Mortimer was handsome, brave, of insinuating address, and sufficiently unprincipled. The affairs of the party brought them into almost perpetual contact, and intimacy speedily ripened into intrigue and criminality. Very soon the position of the queen and Mortimer was universally known. They lived in the most avowed intimacy, and when Edward, made aware of it, insisted on Isabella's immediate return, she declared boldly that she would never set foot in England till Spenser was for ever removed from the royal presence and counsels. This public avowal won her instant and great popularity in England, where Spenser was hated, and threw for awhile a slight veil over her own designs. An active correspondence was opened with the discontented

in England; the vilest calumnies were propagated everywhere against the king, and this disgraceful family quarrel became the common topic of all Europe.

The king of France, from motives of policy, declared himself highly incensed against Edward for his treatment of his sister, and even threatened to redress her wrongs. He still protected her, even after her open connection with Mortimer; though both himself and his two brothers had thrown their wives into prison for irregularity of conduct, where the wife of his brother Louis had been strangled. But though Charles probably never seriously intended to take any active measures on behalf of Isabella, Edward was greatly alarmed, and not only sent, in the name of Spenser, rich presents to the French king and his ministers, but also wrote to the pope, earnestly imploring him to command Charles to restore to him his wife and son. This letter to the pope was strongly backed, according to Froissart, "by much gold and silver to several cardinals and prelates nearest to the pope." The interference of his holiness afforded a sufficient plea for Charles to withdraw all countenance from Isabella, and even to command her to quit the kingdom. To save appearances, therefore, Isabella quitted Paris, and betook herself to the court of the count of Holland and Hainault. That this was a step by no means disagreeable to Charles le Bel, is obvious from the fact that the count was his own vassal, and suffered no remonstrance for this reception of the English queen. The partisanship of the count was of the most decided kind. The queen, the more indissolubly to engage him in her enterprise, affianced her son Edward, the heir to the English throne, to Philippa, his second daughter. The brother of the count, John of Hainault, became a perfect enthusiast in the cause of Isabella, who, still young,—only eight-and-twenty years of age,—and eminently beautiful, seemed to inspire him with all the chivalrous devotion of the most romantic ages. He declared his full faith in Isabella's innocence of all impropriety, with the spectacle of her intimacy with Mortimer daily before his eyes; and he was deaf to all warnings of danger from the jealousies of the English, who, he was assured, were especially disgusted by the interference of foreigners. By this alliance, and the secret assistance of her brother, the king of France, Isabella soon saw herself surrounded by an army of nearly 3,000 men.

Edward, roused by the imminent danger, endeavoured to prepare measures of defence. But the danger was far more extensive than appeared on the surface. Conspiracy did not merely menace from abroad, but penetrated every day deeper, and into the very recesses of his own family. His brother, the earl of Kent, a well-meaning but weak prince, who still remained on the Continent, was persuaded by Isabella and the king of France that it behoved every member of the royal family to join in the attempt to rid the kingdom of the Spensers; and this, they assured him, was the object of the expedition. Won over to what appeared so desirable an attempt, he also won over his elder brother the earl of Norfolk. The earl of Leicester, the brother and heir of the earl of Lancaster, had abundant motives of interest and vengeance for entering into the design. The archbishop of Canterbury and many of the prelates approved of the queen's cause, and aided her with money; several of the most powerful barons were ready to embrace it on her appearance on the English coast; and the minds of the populace were embittered against the king by the industrious dissemination of calumnies and injurious truths.

Isabella set sail from the harbour of Dort with her little army, accompanied by the earl of Kent; and on the 24th of September, 1326, landed at Orwell, in Suffolk. She was soon joined by the earls of Norfolk and Leicester; thus receiving the high sanction of two princes of the blood; the bishops of Lincoln, Ely, and Hereford met her with the sanction of the church and numerous forces. The fleet had been won over and kept out of the way, and the land forces sent against her at once hailed the young prince with acclamations, and joined her banner. Isabella made proclamation that she came to free the nation from the tyranny of the Spensers and of chancellor Baldoc, their creature. The barons, who thought themselves secure from forfeiture in coalition with the prince, made a reconciliation with the barons of the Lancastrian faction, and the people poured in on all sides. Never was a miserable monarch so deserted by his people, and by his own blood. His wife, his son, his brothers, his nobles, his prelates, his people, all were against him. The queen and prince stayed three days in the abbey of the Black Monks at Bury St. Edmunds, where their partisans continually increased.

Meantime, the miserable king appealed to the citizens of London to maintain the royal cause, and issued a proclamation offering a thousand pounds to any one for the head of Mortimer; a pretty sum—equal to ten thousand at the present day. The appeal remained totally unheeded; and Edward fled from his capital, accompanied only by the two Spensers, Baldoc the chancellor, and a few of their retainers. Scarcely were they out of the gates when the populace rose, seized the bishop of Exeter, whom the king had appointed governor, beheaded him, and threw his body into the river. They met with and killed a friend of the favourites—one John le Marshal. They made themselves master of the Tower, and liberated all the state prisoners; a numerous body—most of them suffering from the attempts to put down young Spenser; and they entered into an association to put to death without mercy every one who dared to oppose the queen and prince. Such was the fury of the populace against the king and his favourite; and this spirit appeared in every part of the kingdom.

The poor, forsaken king fled to the Welsh, amongst whom he was born; but they would none of him, and he was compelled to take to the sea with his favourite. The elder Spenser was left in Bristol as governor of the castle; but the garrison mutinied against him, and on the approach of the queen he was delivered up to her. The poor old man, now nearly ninety, was brought before Sir William Trussel, one of the Lancastrian exiles, who, without allowing him to utter a word in his defence, condemned him to death. He was taken without the walls of the city, hanged on a gibbet, his bowels torn out, his body cut to pieces, and thrown to the dogs; and, as he had been made earl of Winchester, his head was sent to that city, and stuck on a pole. Such was the fate of this old man, who had borne a high character through a long life, till strange fortune lifted him aloft, and developed in him the lurking demons of rapacity and lust of his neighbour's goods, ending thus direfully.

The unhappy king, meantime, with the son of this old man, endeavouring, it was supposed, to escape to Ireland, had been tossed about for many days on a stormy sea, which seemed to enter into the rebellion of his people, and to reject him, and cast him up, as it were, on the coast of South Wales. His flight had furnished the barons with a fortunate plea for deposing him. They first issued a proclamation at Bristol, calling on the king to return to his proper post; and, as he did not appear, on the 26th of September, forming themselves into a parliament, they declared that the king had left the realm without a ruler, and appointed the prince of Wales guardian of the kingdom. The king, on landing, knowing what he had to expect, hid himself for some weeks in the mountains near Neath Abbey, in Glamorganshire. His place of retreat was very soon known, and young Spenser and Baldoc were seized in the woods of Lantressan, and immediately afterwards Edward came forth and surrendered himself to the earl of Leicester, the brother of Lancaster, whom he had beheaded at Pontefract. Without a single sign of sympathy or commiseration from high or low, the wholly-abandoned king was sent off a prisoner to Kenilworth. Short and bloody work was made with the favourite. Trussel, the same judge who had condemned his father, condemned him to be drawn, hanged, embowelled, beheaded, and quartered; and the sentence was carried into execution with revolting minuteness. He was hanged on a gallows fifty feet high, and his servant, Simon Reding, was hanged on the same gallows, only a few yards lower. The earl of Arundel, allied to the Spensers by marriage, and one of those active in the death of the earl of Lancaster, was beheaded, with two other noblemen. Baldoc, as a priest, was exempt from the gallows; but, being sent to the bishop of Hereford's palace in London, he was there seized by the enraged populace, as, probably, the senders foresaw, and, though rescued, died soon after in Newgate of his injuries. So terminated the fortunes of Edward's few adherents. His own fate, steeped in still deeper horrors, was fast hastening on.

A parliament—one of those solemn mockeries which we often see in history—was summoned in the king's name to meet at Westminster on the 7th of January, 1327, to condemn the king himself. There Adam Orleton, bishop of Hereford, one of the most violent partisans of the queen and enemies of the king, assumed the office of speaker. The very appearance of such a speaker indicated plainly—had all other circumstances been wanting—the determination of the barons to proceed to extremities with Edward. Orleton, for his attachment to the party of Lancaster, had been deprived of the temporalities of his see by the king, as supposed, at the instance of Hugh Spenser, and he had on every possible occasion since displayed the most vindictive animus against the king. He had spread everywhere with indefatigable activity the filth of the court scandal respecting Edward, and this might have passed for religious zeal in one of his profession and rank in the church, had he not winked as resolutely at the notorious vice of the queen. But he was one of her most energetic partisans in England; hastened to meet her on landing; and in the parliament, and everywhere amongst the barons, when it had been proposed to allow the king to be reconciled to his family, and rule by advice of his nobles, had effectually quashed such sentiments, and turned the tide of opinion for the king's deposition. He now put the formal question, whether the king should be restored, or his son at once raised to the throne. For appearance sake the members were left to deliberate in their own minds on the question till the next day; but there could only be one answer, and that was for the father's dethronement. The public, on hearing that decision, broke forth into loudest acclamations, which were vehemently reiterated when the young king, a boy of fourteen, was presented to them. By a singular informality, parliament deposed Edward first, and judged him afterwards.

Five days after declaring the accession of Edward III. a charge was drawn up against him, in which some eminent historians have appeared to discern the malice of his enemies rather than impartial grounds of complaint. They say that, notwithstanding the violence of his opponents, no particular cause was laid to his charge. True, those which were loudly enough proclaimed by the public of a scandalous nature were omitted, probably out of respect to his son, who was present during the whole proceedings. But what they did charge him with were incapacity for government, waste of time on idle amusements, neglect of business, cowardice, being perpetually under the influence of evil counsellors, of having by imbecility lost Scotland and part of Guienne, with arbitrary and unconstitutional imprisonment, ruin, and death of different nobles.

Surely these, if not all crimes, had all the political effect of crimes on the nation. They were fraught with mischief, public discord, and decay, and must be regarded as ample grounds for deposition. In fact, the whole kingdom was weary of the incurable king; not a single voice was raised in his behalf; and on the 20th of January a deputation was despatched to announce his deposition to him at Kenilworth. This deputation consisted of certain bishops, earls, and barons, with two knights from each shire, and two representatives from each borough. The most glaring feature of harshness in the selection of the deputies was, that the spiteful Adam Orleton, and the savage Sir William Trussel, who had passed such barbarous sentences on Edward's friends the Spensers, were amongst its leading members. At the sight of Orleton the king was so shocked, that he fell to the ground. The interview took place in the great hall of Kenilworth, and the king appeared wrapped in a common black gown. Sir William Trussel, as speaker, pronounced the judgment of parliament, and Sir Thomas Blount, the steward of the household, then broke his white staff of office, and declared all persons discharged and freed from Edward's service, the ceremony being the same as practised on a king's death. On the 24th king Edward III. was proclaimed, it being declared to be by the full consent of the late king; on the 28th the young monarch received the great seal from the chancellor, and re-delivered it to him; and on the 29th he was crowned at Westminster by the archbishop of Canterbury.

The extreme youth of the king enabled queen Isabella, his mother, to have the chief power of the crown vested in her. But her unconcealed connection with the lord Mortimer made her very soon lose the popularity which her pretence of driving away the Spensers had obtained her. Both barons and people looked with ill-suppressed jealousy and disgust at the dangerous position of Mortimer; and, however completely the late king had forfeited public favour, it was not long before the people began to feel that

it was not the part of a wife to have invaded the kingdom, and deposed and pursued to death her husband and the father of her children. Isabella had indeed pretended to lament over the necessity, and to bewail the afflictions of her husband; but her actions belied her words and tears, for she still pressed on his abdication, and was all the time living in openest adultery with her paramour Mortimer. Thus public feeling, the inspiration of nature, grew, and there were not wanting monks who boldly denounced from the pulpit the scandalous life of the queen, and awoke a feeling of commiseration for her captive husband. Those who beheld the proud Mortimer actually occupying, in the name of the queen, the seat of royal power, burned with natural indignation at the degradation of the throne; those who beheld the unfortunate Edward, gentle and depressed in his fallen fortunes, became touched with compassion for him. The earl of Leicester, now earl of Lancaster, though he had a brother's blood in his remembrance, could not help being affected with generous and kindly sentiments towards his prisoner, and was even suspected of entertaining more honourable intentions towards him.

These things were whispered to Isabella, and the king was speedily removed into the care of Sir John Maltravers, a man of a savage disposition, and embittered against the king by injuries received from him and his favourites. Maltravers appeared to study the concealment of his captive, removing him from time to time from one castle to another in the space of a few months. At length lord Berkeley was added to the commission of custody, and the unhappy captive was lodged in Berkeley castle, near the river Severn. While lord Berkeley was there he was treated with the courtesy due to his rank and to his misfortunes; but that nobleman being detained at his manor of Bradley by sickness, the opportunity was taken to leave him in the hands of two of the most hardened and desperate ruffians that the world ever produced, named Gournay and Ogle. These men appeared to take a savage delight in tormenting him. They practised upon him daily every indignity which they could devise. It is stated that one day, when Edward was to be shaved, they ordered cold and filthy water from the castle ditch for that purpose; and when he desired it to be changed, they refused it with mockery, though the unfortunate prince burst into tears, and declared that he would have clean and warm water.

These modes of killing were, however, too slow for those who wanted to be secure from any popular revulsion of feeling in favour of the deposed monarch; and one night, the 21st of September, 1327, frightful shrieks were heard from the castle, and the next morning the gates were thrown open, and the people were freely admitted to see the body of the late king, who, it was said, had died suddenly in the night. Of the nature of that disease there was no doubt on the minds of any one, for the cries of the sufferer's agony had reached even to the town, waking up,

Berkeley Castle.

says Holinshed, "numbers who prayed heartily to God to receive his soul, for they understood by those cries what the matter meant." The murder of Edward of Caernarvon is one of the horrors of history. The fiends who had him in custody, it came out, had thrown him upon a bed and held him down violently with a table, while they had thrust a red-hot iron into his bowels through a tin pipe. By this means there appeared no outward cause of death; but his countenance was distorted and horrible to look upon. Most of the nobles and gentlemen of the neighbourhood went to see the body, which was then privately conveyed to Gloucester, and buried in the abbey, without any inquiry or investigation whatever.

Edward, at the time of his murder, was forty-three years old. He had reigned nineteen years and a half, and spent about nine months in his woful captivity after his deposition.

Maltravers, Gournay, and Ogle were held in universal detestation. Gournay was some years afterwards caught

DEPOSITION OF EDWARD II. (See page 353.)

at Marseilles, and shipped for England; but was beheaded at sea, as was supposed, by order of some of the nobles and prelates in England, to prevent any damaging disclosures regarding their accomplices or abettors. Maltravers found means of doing service to Edward III., and eventually obtained a pardon.

This reign presents a melancholy example of the miseries which befell a nation in those days from a weak king. In those rude times, the throne was not fenced about and supported by the maxims and institutions which now-a-days enable very ordinary kings to fill their high post without any public inconvenience, and verify the observation of the celebrated Swedish chancellor Oxenstjerna, "See, my son, with what very little sense a kingdom may be governed." In Edward II.'s time the convenient maxim was not introduced that a king can do no wrong. The monarch seemed to stand alone amid a race of powerful and ambitious barons, who were always ready to encroach on the throne, and could only be restrained by a strong hand. The king had not, as now-a-days, his council, his ministers, and various officers, to share his responsibilities, and afford him their united talents and advice. He acted more fully from his own individual views, and therefore the consequences to the nation were the more directly good or evil as the king was wise or not. In Edward II.'s reign we find the arms of the nation disgraced, its hold on Scotland and France weakened, and the existence of internal discord and much civil bloodshed. We do not find those great enactments of laws which distinguished the reign of his father, and the estates of the crown were greatly wasted on unworthy favourites. Yet, even in this reign the people gained something, as they have always done, from the necessities of kings. The barons, by the ordinances which they wrung from the weak hands of this king, extended the privileges of parliament, and circumscribed the power of the crown. They decreed that all grants made without consent of parliament should henceforth be invalid; that the king could not make war or leave the kingdom without consent of the baronage in parliament assembled, who should appoint a regent during the royal absence; that all the great officers of the crown, and all governors of foreign possessions, should at all times be chosen by the baronage, or with their advice and assent, in parliament. These were all important conquests from the crown, and came by time to be the established privileges of parliament at large, not exclusively of the peers.

The very usurpations and arbitrary deeds of the favourites produced permanent good out of temporary evil; for the barons compelled Edward to renew the Great Charter, and introduced a new and most valuable provision into it; namely: "Forasmuch as many people be aggrieved by the king's ministers against right, in respect to which grievances no one can recover without common consent of parliament, we do ordain that the king shall hold a parliament once a year, or twice, if need be." Thus, out of this king's fatal facility to favouritism came his own destruction, but that grand security of public liberty, the annual assembling of parliament.

Besides the troubles related, the kingdom during this reign was afflicted by a severe famine, which lasted for several years. The dearth was not produced by drought but by continued rains and cold weather, which destroyed the harvests, and produced great mortality amongst the cattle, and, of course, raised the price of everything to an enormous pitch; which parliament, not having at that day the benefit of Adam Smith and political economy, endeavoured to keep down by enacting, in 1315, a tariff of rates for all articles of life, which they very soon discovered was useless, and therefore repealed it.

In this reign also took place one of those great political changes which spring of necessity from the progress of society; this was the abolition of the celebrated order of the Knights Templars. This famous order was one of three religious military orders which arose out of the crusades. The other two were the knights of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem, commonly called Knights Hospitallers, and the Teutonic knights of St. Mary of Jerusalem, or German knights of the cross, all of which arose in the twelfth century. The foundation of the order of Knights Templars, or brethren of the Temple of Solomon, or soldiers of the Temple, or soldiers of Christ, is said to have taken place in 1118 or 1119. Nine knights, all French, took a vow to maintain free passage for pilgrims to the Holy Land. To this vow they added those of poverty, chastity, obedience, and battle against the infidels. For six or seven years they did not add to their numbers, but in 1128 pope Honorius II. confirmed a rule of the council of Troyes on their behalf, thus fully recognising them as an orthodox body, the *Pauperes Commilitones*, or pauper soldiers of the Holy City. Honorius appointed them to wear a white mantle, and in 1146 Eugenius III. added a red cross on the left breast, in imitation of the white cross of the Hospitallers, whose business it was to attend the sick and wounded, and entertain pilgrims. This red cross, borne also on their banners, became famous all over the world, from the valour of these knights, who hence acquired the common cognomen of Red Cross Knights.

The order speedily grew into fame and popularity. Young men of the noblest families of every nation in Christendom eagerly sought admittance into it. They became extremely numerous, in time admitting priests, and persons of lower order, or esquires. Their chief seat after the expulsion from Jerusalem by Saladin was in Cyprus, but they had also provinces in Tripolis, Antioch, Portugal, Spain, France, England, Scotland, Ireland, Germany, Italy, and Sicily. Their history is the history of all the wars of the Christians against the Infidels in the East, and for 170 years they formed the most renowned portion of the Christian troops. But with fame came also immense wealth, with its usual sequence, corruption. Their vows had become a mockery. Instead of poverty and chastity, they became notorious for the splendour of their abodes, and the pomp, luxury, and licentiousness of their lives.

In the time of Edward II. they had incurred the resentment of his brother-in-law, Philip le Bel, of France. They were suspected of exciting the Parisians to a resistance to the debasement of the coin, which Philip was noted for; but there needed no other temptation to their destruction with this needy prince than their immense wealth. In 1306 the grand master of the Temple, Jacques de Molay, was summoned to Europe by Pope Clement V., who had secretly agreed with Philip to suppress the order. De Molay was summoned on pretence of consulting with the Pope on uniting the two orders of the Templars and Hospitallers. Witnesses were soon found to charge the whole order of the Templars with the systematic practice of the most re-

volting crimes, and on the 12th of September, 1307, secret orders were sent to all the governors of towns in France, by which in one night the whole of the Templars in France, including De Molay, the grand master, were seized and thrown into prison. Their houses and property were everywhere seized, and their great stronghold, the Temple, in Paris, was taken possession of by Philip himself. For the space of six years there now followed the most extraordinary and terrible scenes. The members of the order were put to the most savage tortures to compel them to confess to the most incredible crimes, and on recanting their forced confessions, they were burnt at the stake. In Paris, Rheims, Sens, Vienne, and various other places these dreadful cruelties and butcheries were perpetrated, till on the 22nd of March, 1312, the Pope abolished the order for ever. On the 18th of March, 1314, De Molay, the grand master, and Guy, commander, or grand prior of Normandy, were burnt on one of the small islands of the Seine.

In England and Ireland they were all in like manner arrested by sealed orders on a particular day, and their property of all kinds, as well ecclesiastical as temporal, was confiscated. In this country, however, they were treated with great lenity: the witnesses brought against them refused to declare that they knew anything to their discredit, or, indeed, anything of their secret principles or practices. The pope, incensed at this lenity, wrote strongly to Edward, exhorting him to try torture. A threat of treating them as heretics induced all but the grand master, William de la More, to confess their heresy; and they were sent to pass the remainder of their lives as prisoners in different monasteries, the revenues of their immense estates being conferred by king and parliament on the Hospitallers, or knights of St. John of Jerusalem. Their chief seat was the Temple in Fleet Street, which they erected in 1185; but as early as the reign of Stephen they were established in the old Temple on the south side of Holborn, near the present Southampton Buildings.

So fell this mighty order. Matthew of Paris asserts their manors or estates throughout Christendom to have amounted to nine thousand, and their income to be not less than six millions sterling. With the exception of Spain and Portugal, their property, as in England, was given to the knights of St. John. Much has been written on the secret principles of this famous order, which is affirmed still to exist in Paris, possessing the original registers, and an unbroken succession of grand masters from De Molay to the present time. A society of this name certainly exists in Paris; and in England, and also in Germany, the Freemasons are said to be the representatives of the ancient Templars.

King Edward II. left four children, two sons and two daughters. Edward succeeded him; John, earl of Cornwall, died early at Perth; Jane was married to David Bruce, king of Scotland; and Eleanor to Reginald, count of Gueldres.

CHAPTER LXIII.

Edward III.—Incursions of the Scots under Douglas and Randolph—Edward's First Campaign against them—Schemes of Mortimer—Execution of the King's Uncle, the Earl of Kent—Fall of Mortimer, and Imprisonment of the Queen Isabella—Enterprise of Edward Baliol and the disinherited Nobles against Scotland.—War by Edward III. in Support of Baliol.

THE sceptre of England, taken by the indignant nation from the feeble grasp of Edward of Caernarvon, was once more in the hand of a strong man. Edward III., sprung immediately from a feeble parent, was, however, of the stock of mighty kings, and the grandson of the first of his name, the stern "Hammer of Scotland," and conqueror of Wales. In the youthful monarch all the vigour and ability of Edward I. revived; and in his reign the fame of England rose far higher than it had ever yet reached, bringing the two words of martial glory, "Cressy" and "Poictiers," into the language, and making them like the notes of a trumpet in the ears of Englishmen in every age. True, the conquests which they marked soon faded away; but the prestige of British valour which they created was created for all time. In no period of our history did the spirit of chivalry show more in the ascendant than in this reign, nor leave names of more knightly lustre on the page of our history; including not only the monarch and his illustrious son, but a numerous list of leaders in the field. Whether the practical utility or the political wisdom of the great deeds done, exclusive of the renown conferred on the nation, was equal to their *éclat*, remains for us to determine after our record of them. But at the commencement of his reign the future conqueror of Cressy was but a boy of fourteen. The lion of England was yet but the ungrown and playful cub, and was under the guardianship of a mother of tarnished reputation, and in the real power of her bold paramour, Roger Mortimer.

For appearance sake, indeed, a council of regency was appointed during the minority of the young king; and this council was composed of twelve of the most influential noblemen and prelates of the realm; namely, five prelates, the archbishops of York and Canterbury, the bishops of Winchester, Worcester, and Hereford; and seven lay lords, the earls of Norfolk, Kent, and Surrey, the lords Wake, Ingham, Piercy, and De Roos. The earl of Lancaster was appointed guardian and protector of the king's person.

Having named this regency, the parliament then passed an act of indemnity, including all those engaged in the deposition of the late king; reversed the attainders against the late earl of Lancaster and his adherents; confiscated the immense and ill-gotten estates of the Despensers; and granted to the queen-mother a large sum of money to discharge her debts, and a jointure of twenty thousand pounds a year; a sum quite equal in value to one hundred thousand pounds now. This last enactment, in fact, established the supremacy of the queen and her paramour Mortimer: the council became, as they meant it to be, a mere empty figure of state policy; Mortimer, who had taken care not even to have his name placed on the council, as affecting the modesty of a private man, now all appeared secure, assumed the state and establishment of a king.

Boy, however, as the king was, his spirit was too active and inquiring to leave him with safety unemployed about the court; he would be sure there to be soon making observations which, ere long, might bring trouble to the usurpers. Mortimer tried to keep him entertained by various frivolous amusements; but there needed something more active and engrossing, and which would lead him to a distance from the court; and this was speedily furnished by the Scots. Their successes over Edward II., and especially their grand triumph at Bannockburn, had greatly elated them; and the present crisis, when there was a deposed king, and a mere boy on the throne, appeared too tempting to omit a profitable incursion into England.

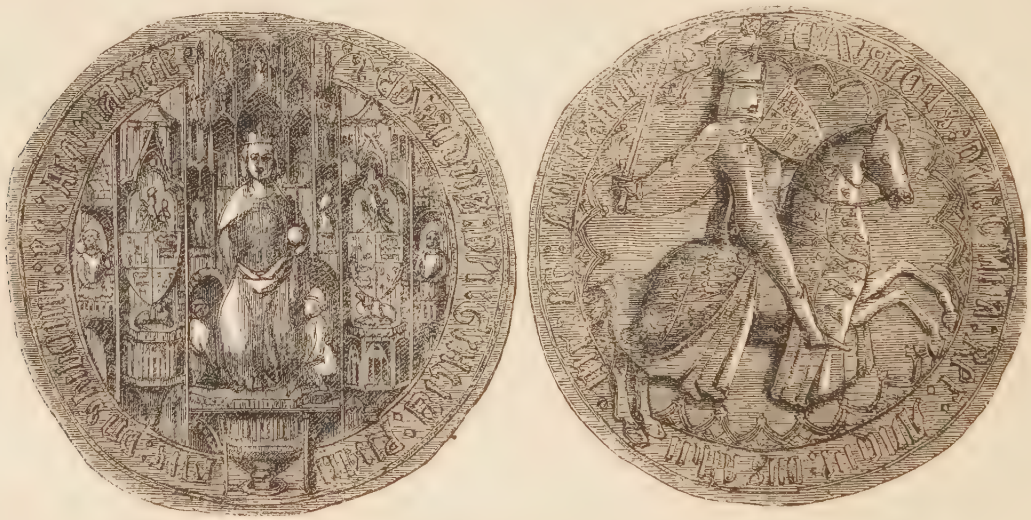
Robert Bruce was now growing, if not old, yet infirm; but he was as full as ever of martial daring.

At this distance of time it appears equally impolitic and ungenerous in the Scots to make this attack. There was a truce existing between the kingdoms, and it might seem as if it would have been more prudent every way for the Scots to strengthen and consolidate their internal forces than thus wantonly to provoke their old and potent enemies. But the state of rancour between the two countries no doubt impelled them to this course. Probably, too, the hope of regaining at such a period the northern provinces of England, which had formerly belonged to Scotland, was an actuating cause. Bruce appointed to this service his two great generals, the good lord James Douglas and his nephew Thomas Randolph, now earl of Moray, some of whose daring exploits we have had already to record. They were to lay waste the counties of Durham and Northumberland, and do all the injury to England that they could. They made an attempt on the castle of Norham, but were repulsed with heavy loss. They then increased their army to twenty-five thousand, summoning the vassals of the crown from every quarter, Highlands, Lowlands, and isles.

This army of Scots has been most graphically described by Froissart. He represents them as lightly armed, nimble, and hardy, and, from their simple mode of living, capable of making rapid marches or retreats, being totally unencumbered with baggage. There were four thousand cavalry, well-mounted and well-armed; the rest were mounted on ponies, active, but strong, which could pick up a subsistence anywhere. The men carried no provisions, except a small bag of oatmeal, and, says the chronicler, "they had no need of pots or pans, for they cooked the beasts, when they had skinned them, in a simple manner." That is, they killed the cattle of the English, of which they found plenty on their march, and roasted the flesh on wooden spits, or boiled it in the skins of the animals themselves, putting on a little water with the beef to prevent the hides being burnt. They also cut up the hides for their shoes, fitting them to their feet and ankles while raw, with the hair outwards; so that from this cause the English called them the rough-footed Scots, and *red-shanks*, from the colour of the hides.

Every man carried at his saddle an iron plate called a girdle, on which, whenever they halted, they could bake cakes of thin oatmeal. Thus armed, and thus provisioned, the Scots could speed from mountain to mountain, and from glen to glen, with amazing rapidity, advancing to pillage, or disappearing at the approach of an enemy, as if they were nowhere at hand. With such forces Douglas and Randolph crossed the Tweed, ravaged Durham and Northumberland, and advanced into the county of York.

To oppose these invaders the English raised rapidly an army said to amount to sixty thousand men. They had recalled John of Hainault and some cavalry which they had dismissed; and the young king of fourteen, burning with impatience to chastise the Scots, marched hastily towards the north. His progress, however, suffered some delay at York, from a violent quarrel which broke out between the English archers and the foreign troops under John of Hainault. The archers, and especially those of Lincolnshire, who probably had an old feud with the natives of Flanders, displayed a dogged dislike to these troops, and in the streets of York they came actually to downright battle, and many men were killed on both sides. This difference quelled, if not settled, the English army moved on. Very soon they came in sight of burning farms and villages, which marked the track of the Scots. These Scots, however, themselves were nowhere visible, for they retreated with double the celerity with which the English, heavily loaded with baggage, could follow them. The Scots did not retreat directly north, but took, according to Froissart, their way westward, amongst the savage deserts and bad mountains and valleys, as he calls them, of Cumberland and Westmoreland. The English crossed the Tyne, trusting to cut off the homeward route of the enemy; but the utterly desolated condition of the country compelled them to recross that river, for no sustenance could be procured for the troops. After thus vainly pursuing this light-footed foe for some time, Edward, excessively chagrined in not being able to come up with them, or even to find them, offered a freehold worth a hundred pounds a year and the honours of



Great Seal of Edward III.

knighthood to any one who would bring him intelligence of the enemy. After severe hardships, and enormous fatigue to the soldiers, wading through waters and swamps, a man, one Thomas of Rokeby, came riding hard to the camp, and claimed the reward offered by the king. He said he had been made prisoner by the Scots, and that they had said they should be as glad to see the English king as he would to see them. This was not very probable, as they might have waited for the king, which they had taken care not to do. There, however, they lay, at not more than three leagues distant.

The reason of the Scots now halting was visible enough when the English came up. They found them posted on the right bank of the Weir, where the river was deep and rapid, and there was no possibility of getting at them. Even could they cross the river, they must climb a steep hill in face of the enemy to attack them. Under these circumstances, Edward sent a challenge to the Scottish generals to meet him on a fair and open field, either by drawing back and allowing him to cross the river to attack them, or giving them the same option to cross over to his side. Douglas, piqued at this proposal, advised to accept the challenge; but the more politic Moray refused, and replied to Edward, that he never took the advice of an enemy in any of his movements. He reminded the king, as if to pique him to dare the unequal attempt of crossing in their faces, how long they had been in his country, spoiling and wasting at their pleasure. If the king did not like their proceedings, he added, insultingly, he might get over to them the best way he could.

Edward kept his ground opposite to them for three days; the Scots at night making great fires along their lines, and all night long, according to the chronicler, "horning with their horns, and making such a noise as if all the great devils from hell had come there." In the daytime some of the most adventurous knights from the English army swam their strong horses across the river, and skirmished with the Scots—rather to show their gallantry than for any real effect. On the fourth morning it was found that the Scots had entirely decamped, and were discovered after awhile posted in a still stronger position higher up the river. Here Edward again sat down facing them, confidently hoping that they must be forced, from want of provisions, to come out and fight. As, however, they did not do this, the young king's patience became exhausted, and he desired to pass the river at all hazards, and come to blows with the Scots. This Mortimer would not assent to; and while lying, highly discontented with this restraint, on the bank of the river, Edward had a narrow escape of being taken prisoner.

The brave Douglas, being held back by Moray, as Edward was by Mortimer, from a general engagement, planned one of those heroic exploits in which he so much delighted. Making himself acquainted with the English password for the night, and taking an accurate survey of the English camp, he advanced, when it was near midnight, with two hundred picked horsemen, silently crossed the river, at some distance above the English position, and then, as silently turning, made for the English camp. He found it carelessly guarded, and, seeing this, he rode past the English sentinels, as if he had been an English officer, saying, "Ha, Saint George! you keep bad watch here!" Presently he heard an English soldier say to his comrades, as they lay by a fire, "I cannot tell what is to happen here, but somehow I have a great fear of the Black Douglas playing us some trick."

"You shall have cause to say so," said Douglas to himself. When he had got fairly into the English camp he cut the ropes of a tent with his sword, calling out his usual war-cry, "A Douglas! a Douglas! English thieves, ye are all dead men." His followers immediately fell upon the camp, cutting down the tents, overturning them, and killing the men as they started up to seize their arms. Douglas, meanwhile, had reached the royal pavilion, and was as near as possible seizing the young king, but the chaplain, the chamberlain, and some of the king's household, being alarmed, stood boldly in his defence, and enabled him to escape under the canvas of the tent, though they lost their own lives. Douglas, being now separated from his followers, many of whom were killed, endeavoured to make good his retreat, but was in danger of being killed by a man who attacked him with a huge club. This man, however, he slew, and escaped in safety to his own camp; his party having, it is said, killed about three hundred men.

Soon after this the Scots made an effectual retreat in the night by having beforehand cut a pathway through a great bog which lay behind them, and filling it withfaggots; a road which is still remaining in Weardale, and called from this cause the "Shorn Moss." The young king, on entering the evacuated place of encampment the next day, found nothing but six Englishmen tied to trees, and with their legs broken, to prevent them carrying any intelligence to their countrymen.

Edward, disgusted with his want of success, returned southward, and the Scots arrived in safety in their own country. On reaching York the English king disbanded his army. He then returned to London, highly dissatisfied, young as he was, with the state of things. Mortimer had usurped all power. Edward believed that from cowardice, or from some hidden motive, he had prevented him taking ample vengeance on the Scots. At court he had set aside the whole of the royal council; consulted neither prince of the blood nor the nobles on any public measure, concentrating in himself, as it were, all the sovereign authority. He endowed the queen with nearly the whole of the royal revenues, and enjoyed them in her name. He himself was so besieged with his own party and parasites, that no one else could approach him, and the people of all ranks now hated him as cordially as they had once done Gaveston.

Sensible of this growing public odium, he now sought to make a peace with Scotland, to secure himself from attack on that side; and perhaps the king was not so far wrong in attributing his backwardness to attack the Scots to some private motive. Certain it is that the following year, 1328, he made peace with Robert Bruce on terms which astonished and deeply incensed the whole nation. To give the greatest firmness to the treaty he proposed a marriage between Joan or Joanna, the sister of Edward, then only seven years of age, and David, the son of Robert Bruce, then only five. That the Scots might accede promptly to this offer, he agreed to renounce the great principle for which the English nation had been so long contending, its claim of right to the crown of Scotland. These terms were of course eagerly accepted, and the treaty, to make all sure, was at once carried into effect. About Whitsuntide

a parliament was called together at Northampton, which ratified the treaty, thus acknowledging the full independence of Scotland, and on the 22nd of July the marriage was solemnised at Berwick, where Isabella had brought her daughter. This young bride was significantly called by the Scotch "Joan Makepeace," and with her was delivered up many jewels, charters, &c., which had been carried away from Scotland by Edward I.

In return for these unlooked-for advantages, Bruce agreed to pay the king of England thirty thousand marks as compensation for damages done in his kingdom.

Edward himself, a few months previous to this marriage of his sister, had received his long-affianced wife, Philippa of Hainault, who had been brought to this country by Isabella's champion, John of Hainault, the young queen's uncle. Philippa proved one of the best wives and queens which the annals of England can boast.

We may here notice the death of Robert Bruce, which took place in the following year, 1329. He was by no means old, being only fifty-four, but he was worn down by the disease and infirmities contracted through the severe exertions, hardships, and exposures endured in his stupendous endeavours for the liberation of Scotland. Robert Bruce may be pronounced one of the ablest, most patriotic, and wise monarchs who ever lived. He entered into contest with an enemy who appeared to most men too powerful for any hope of success, and left his country at peace and independent. With some exceptions, even in that hard and iron age, his character was marked by great tenderness and amiability. His destruction of the Red Comyn was an act which, though dictated by policy, his conscience never approved. On his death-bed he reverted to it, declaring that he had always meant to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in expiation of the crime, but, as he could not do that, he commissioned his dearest friend and bravest warrior to carry his heart thither. In contrast to and palliation of the slaughter of the Red Comyn, we may place such actions as that in which he stopped his army in retreat in Ireland because a poor woman, who had just given birth to a child, had no means of being conveyed on with the troops, and was heard by him lamenting that she should be left to the cruelties of the Irish.

Edward III.

No sooner did Bruce understand her complaint than he looked round on his officers with eyes which kindled like fire, and exclaimed, "Gentlemen, never let it be said that a man who was born of a woman and nursed by a woman's tenderness, could leave a mother and an infant to the mercy of barbarians. In the name of God, let the odds and the risk be what they will, let us fight rather than leave these poor creatures behind us." The army halted and drew up in order of battle, and Edmund Butler, the English general, believing that Bruce had received reinforcements,

RECEPTION OF PHILIPPA OF HAINAULT AT LONDON.

hesitated to attack him; so that Bruce had opportunity to send on the woman and child, and retreat at his leisure.

Robert Bruce died at his castle of Cardross on the 7th of June, 1329; and Douglas some time after, setting out with several brave knights to carry the heart of the king to Jerusalem, enclosed in a silver case, and hung from his neck, stopped to fight the infidels in Spain, where he was killed; but his remains were brought back to Scotland, as well as the heart of Bruce, which was buried behind the high altar in the abbey of Melrose. The body of Bruce was interred in the church of Dunfermline, where some years ago the tomb was opened, and the remains of his bones were found, and clearly identified, after a rest of more than five hundred years, by the breast-bone having been sawn through to take out the heart, and by fragments of the cloth of gold in which he was known to have been wrapped.

The peace thus concluded with Scotland did not make Mortimer feel as secure as he had hoped. Indeed, it added greatly to the popular resentment against him. His having so readily yielded up the claims of the nation on Scotland wounded the public feeling; whilst his arbitrary and ambitious conduct in domestic affairs drew upon him the hatred of the people and the jealousy of the nobles. He assumed a splendour even outvying royalty. He grasped, like all favourites, at riches and honours insatiably. At the parliament held in October at Salisbury he caused himself to be created earl of March, or lord of the marches of Wales. He grossly abused the prerogative of purveyance, thus robbing the public extensively. Amongst the barons who beheld this haughty career of Mortimer with disgust, were the earls of Lancaster, Kent, and Norfolk, all princes of the blood. Lancaster was guardian of the king, yet he was kept carefully in the hands of Mortimer and the queen-mother. Lancaster therefore determined to assert the authority of his office, and put some check on Mortimer; but coming to a contest at Winchester, he was obliged to retreat, and Mortimer then fell on his estates, and ravaged them as he would an enemy's country. When the three earls were summoned to parliament at Salisbury, he strictly forbade them to come attended by an armed body; a common, though an illegal, practice in those times. They complied with the command, but found, on approaching the city, that Mortimer himself was attended by his party and their followers, all strongly armed. Alarmed for their personal safety, they made a hasty retreat, and were returning with their forces, when, from some cause unknown, the earls of Kent and Norfolk suddenly deserted Lancaster, who was compelled to make a humiliating submission, and pay a heavy fine. Through the intercession of the prelates the peace was apparently restored amongst these powerful men.

Probably Kent and Norfolk had been tampered with to induce them to desert Lancaster; certain it is that soon after, the weak but well-meaning Kent was made the victim of a gross stratagem by Mortimer. He surrounded Kent by his creatures, who asserted that his brother, Edward II., was still alive. The earl's remorse for the share he had had in his brother's ruin made him eagerly listen to a story of this kind. They represented to him that it was a fact well and widely known amongst the people, that the body said to be the king's, which was exhibited at Berkeley castle, and afterwards buried at Gloucester, was not his, but that he was now actually a prisoner in Corfe castle. Some monks lent themselves to the base scheme; and exhorted the earl of Kent to rise to the rescue of his unfortunate brother, assuring him that his fate excited the deepest feeling, and that various nobles and prelates, from whom they professed to come, would at once join in the generous enterprise. No means were spared to lead their victim into the snare. Letters were forged as coming from the pope, stimulating him to this course, as one required of him as a brother. The earl, completely deceived by this infamous conspiracy, wrote letters to his supposed captive brother, which were handed to Sir John Maltravers, believed by the earl to be cognisant of the poor king's incarceration, but in reality one of his murderers. These letters were duly conveyed to Mortimer and the queen-mother, and were speedily treated as ample proofs of the earl's treasonable designs. The earl was invited to come to Winchester, where a parliament, consisting entirely of the faction of the wicked queen and Mortimer, arrested him on the charge of conspiring against the present government, and condemned him to death and loss of his estate. Lest the young king should take compassion on his uncle, the queen and Mortimer hastened his execution. But now was seen a singular sight. Not a man could be found who would take the office of executioner; and there was the son of the great Edward I. seen standing on the scaffold before the castle gate for many hours, for want of a headsman. Such was the detestation of that lascivious woman and of her base and murderous paramour, and such the veneration for that worthy nobleman, that not a man, of any degree whatever, either of the city or neighbourhood, could be induced by rewards or menaces to take up the axe, till a mean wretch from the Marshalsea prison, to save his own life, at length consented to take the life of Edmund of Woodstock, earl of Kent. This was the more remarkable because great complaints were made by the public of the insolence and rapacity of the earl's retainers, who, on the plea of the royal right of purveyance, would take anything as they rode abroad without thinking of paying the parties to whom it belonged. This was, indeed, a great complaint which was frequently brought to parliament against all the princes of the blood of those times, who used the privilege of purveyance to plunder the defenceless people at will. Personally, however, the earl of Kent was much beloved; and though the king, his nephew, had signed the sentence, the guilt of it was charged on the queen-mother and Mortimer. The alleged accomplices of the earl were allowed to escape except Robert de Teuton and a poor prior, who had told the earl that he had raised a spirit to inquire whether Edward II. was really still living. This poor man was imprisoned for life.

The wickedness and rapacity of the queen and Mortimer did not cease there. Lancaster was thrown into prison. Numbers of the nobility and prelates were implicated, and Mortimer used this fear of treason to crush his enemies and aggrandise himself by their property. The estate of the earl of Kent he gave to his younger son Geoffrey; the vast demesnes of the Spensers he seized for himself. His power became most ominous, and his deeds of arbitrary injustice were more and more complained of, till all parties forgot their mutual feuds and united against him.

It is the fate of overgrown upstarts never to foresee their ruin. Had not this blind fatality attached to Mortimer in

common with his class, he must have been sensible that the young king was of a character and arriving at an age which would bring his destruction. There were not wanting rumours at the time that Mortimer did not overlook this probable issue, and had thoughts of destroying the king and assuming the crown. His own time, however, was come. Edward, long galled by the restraint in which he was held, now approached his eighteenth year, and his queen Philippa had already brought him a son, afterwards the famous Black Prince, who was born at Woodstock about three months after the execution of the earl of Kent. The conduct of the queen and Mortimer was become more openly scandalous, and it was generally said that Isabella was about to become a mother. Edward resolved to act, but he was aware that he was closely surrounded by the spies of Mortimer, and he went to work with all the caution of a man conspiring against his sovereign. He fixed on the lord Montacute as the nobleman in whose prudence and fidelity he had most confidence. Lord Montacute entered cordially into his plans, and soon engaged some trusty and influential friends in the enterprise; the lords Clifford and Molines, Sir John Nevil of Hornby, Sir Edward Bohun, and others.

The queen dowager and Mortimer were residing in the castle of Nottingham. The king and his coadjutors determined to make that fortress the scene of their enterprise. A parliament was summoned to meet there in October of the year 1330. In order, however, as is supposed, to prevent suspicion of the king being bent on any high designs, he held a tournament in Cheapside, which continued three days, and in which he and twelve others jousted with all knights that appeared in the lists. The young queen presided, and was regarded with extreme favour by the people; an interest which was greatly heightened by an accident—the breaking down of the platform on which she sat with many other ladies of the court, but from which they all escaped without injury.

The time being arrived for the opening of parliament, Edward, with all his barons, prelates, and retainers, repaired to the ancient town of Nottingham. The young king took up his quarters in the castle with his mother and Mortimer; an arrangement at once convenient, as gaining him access and exact knowledge of the lodging of the earl, and also as preserving him from any suspicion. The barons, bishops, and knights took up their quarters in the town. Mortimer appeared in high state, accompanied wherever he went by a strong body of devoted followers. The plans of Edward and his coadjutors were settled, and lord Montacute was seen riding away into the country with a numerous body of his friends and attendants, as if going on a visit to some neighbouring baron. This undoubtedly was intended to divert suspicion; but the plot had not been so closely kept as to escape the quick ears of the emissaries of Mortimer. On the afternoon of that day he entered the council with a face inflamed with rage. He declared to the council that a base attempt was in agitation against the queen and himself, and charged Edward bluntly with being concerned in it. Edward as stoutly denied the charge, but Mortimer pronounced his denial false. The council broke up in confusion. The castle, standing on a lofty precipice overlooking the lovely valley of the Trent, was strongly fortified on the side of the town. A numerous guard was placed around it under these alarming circumstances, and Mortimer and his adherents were all on the alert to watch against surprise, and to plan schemes of defeat and vengeance on their enemies. It did not appear a very easy matter to secure the usurper in that stronghold.

But the town and castle of Nottingham are built on a soft sand rock, in which the ancient inhabitants had sunk many caves, deep cells, and subterranean passages. One of these descended from the castle court to the foot of the precipice near the small river Leen, where the entrance was at that time concealed by a wild growth of bushes. Probably the existence of this passage was wholly unknown to Mortimer and the queen; and the criminal couple, having the strong military guard placed at the gates at evening, and the keys conveyed to the queen, who laid them by her bedside, deemed themselves perfectly secure. But the lord Montacute had sounded Sir William Eland, the governor, who entered at once most zealously into the design. By him Montacute and his friends were admitted through this passage, still called "Mortimer's Hole," and on arriving in the court they were joined by the king, who led the way in profound silence and in darkness to an apartment adjoining the hall, in which they could hear the voices of Mortimer, the bishop of Lincoln, and others of his friends in anxious discussion. Suddenly the concealed party burst open the door, and killed two of Mortimer's friends who attempted to make a defence. Queen Isabella, who lay in an adjoining apartment, rushed in terror from her bed, imploring her "sweet son" to spare "her gentle Mortimer!" Her tears and entreaties for "her worthy knight, her dearest friend, her beloved cousin," were in vain; the lord of the marches and dictator of the kingdom was led away in safe custody, and on the morrow brought before parliament, and condemned to death on the charges of having usurped the royal power vested in the council of regency; of having procured the death of the late king; of having beguiled the earl of Kent into a conspiracy to restore that prince—that is, to restore a dead man; for having compassed exorbitant grants of the crown lands; dissipated the public treasures; embezzled twenty thousand marks of the money paid by the king of Scots, and for many other high crimes and misdemeanors. A more general parliament, summoned at Westminster on the 26th of November, confirmed this sentence, that he should be drawn and hanged as a traitor. In the informality of the times, Mortimer was not allowed to make any defence; nor were any witnesses produced for or against him. He was declared at once guilty from the notoriety of his crimes. On this ground, nearly twenty years afterwards, the sentence was reversed by parliament in favour of Mortimer's son; the plea being the illegality of the proceeding.

Mortimer was hanged at the Elms, near London, on the 29th of November, and with him Sir Simon Beresford as an accomplice. Three others, who were likewise included in the sentence, one of them being the infamous Maltravers, escaped.

Edward now made proclamation that he had taken the government of the realm into his own hands. He shut up his mother in her own house of Risings, abolished her extravagant jointure, but allowed her three thousand, and afterwards four thousand pounds per annum. There she passed twenty-seven years, her son paying her a visit once or twice annually, but taking care that she never again regained any public influence or authority.

Having disposed of his shameless mother, Edward found ample employment in restoring rule and order to his kingdom. As in all times when lawless power prevails at court, robbers, murderers, and criminals had increased to an enormous extent; public justice was grossly perverted, and abuses and wrongs everywhere abounded. He issued writs to the judges, commanding them to administer justice firmly, promptly, and without fear or favour, paying no regard whatever to any injunctions from the ministers of the crown or any other power. He sought out and severely punished the abuses in the administration of the state, and exacted from the peers a solemn pledge that they should break off all connection with malefactors,—a circumstance which gives us a curious insight into the times, the great barons keeping the robbers and outlaws in pay against each other, and even against the king. This done, Edward turned his attention to what appeared the grand hereditary object of the English crown of that day, the subjugation of Scotland.

The great Robert Bruce, as we have seen, had left his son David, a mere boy, on the throne. He could not but be anxious for the stability of his position with such a powerful kingdom and martial young king in his immediate neighbourhood, and with the long pursued claims and attempts of England on Scotland. He had, indeed, taken a strong precaution against the invasion of his son's peace by marrying him to the sister of Edward of England. But the temptation of ambition in princes has almost always proved far stronger than the ties of blood, and so it proved in Edward's case. We might have expected that he would maintain rather than attempt to destroy the happiness and fair establishment of his sister on the throne of Scotland. But the spirit of military domination was as powerful in Edward as in his grandfather. He could not forget that Scotland had nearly been secured by England, and that the English had lost a great prestige at Bannockburn. He burned, therefore, to restore the reputation of the English arms, and complete the design of uniting the whole of the island of Great Britain into one kingdom—the life-long aim and dying command of the great Edward I.

When princes are desirous of pleas of aggression these are never long to seek, and in this case they were abundant and plausible. In the treaty of peace and alliance concluded between Bruce and Edward at Northampton, when Joan was affianced to the heir of Scotland, just before Bruce's death, it was stipulated that both the Scottish families who had lost their estates in Scotland by taking part with the English in the late wars, and the English nobles who had claims on estates there by marriage or heirship, should all be restored to them. The Scotch were admitted; but Bruce, perceiving that the estates of the English were much more valuable than the others, had been unwilling to allow so many dangerous subjects of the English king to establish themselves in the heart of his realm, where they might become formidable enemies. He had therefore put off their urgent demands of fulfilment of this stipulation, on the plea that it required time and caution to dispossess the potent Scotch barons now holding them. The claim of Lord Henry Percy was conceded; those of the lords Wake and Beaumont, the latter of whom claimed the earldom of Buchan in right of his wife, were disregarded. Beaumont, a man of great power, and of a determined character, resolved by some means to conquer his right. He urged it upon Edward to redress the wrongs of his subjects; but Edward, now freed from the ascendency of Mortimer, though nothing loth, pleaded the impossibility of his armed interference in the face of the late solemn treaty and alliance, and he had used persuasions in vain. Probably he gave these malcontents, however, to understand that he would not prevent them trying to help themselves. Not only was Bruce dead, but his two great warriors and statesmen, Moray and Douglas, also. Moray had been left regent and guardian of the young king David, still only about nine years of age; but to his vigorous administration had succeeded that of the earl of Mar, another nephew of Robert Bruce, and a much inferior man.

At this favourable crisis Beaumont turned his attention upon Edward Baliol, the son of John Baliol, who had been in vain placed on the Scottish throne by Edward I. John Baliol had retired to his patrimonial estate in Normandy, where he had died, and where his son Edward had continued to reside in privacy. His pretensions to the Scottish crown had been so decidedly repelled by the Scotch, that he had given up all idea of ever reviving them; and for some private offence he had been thrown into prison. There Beaumont found him; and pitching upon him as the very instrument which he needed to authorise a descent on Scotland immediately, on the ground of his sufferings as a private person, obtained his enlargement, and took him away with him to England, the French king suspecting nothing of the real design. There he represented to Edward the splendid opportunity which thus presented itself of regaining the ascendency over Scotland by putting forward Baliol as claimant of the crown. Edward could not do this openly for many reasons. In the first place, nothing could be more injurious to his character for justice and natural affection, were he with a preponderating force to attack the throne of a minor, and that minor his brother-in-law. In the next place he was bound by a solemn treaty not to assault or prejudice the kingdom of Scotland for four years, and the penalty for the violation of this engagement was twenty thousand pounds.

The regent of Scotland, however, as well as the late king, had always admitted the justice of the claims of the disinherited nobles, yet had always evaded all demands for restoration. Edward's plan, therefore, was to meet artifice with artifice; and accordingly he connived at the assembling of Baliol's forces in the north of England, and at the active preparations of the nobles who intended to join him. Umphraville, earl of Angus, the lords Beaumont, Wake, Ferrars, Talbot, Fitzwarin, Stafford, and Mowbray, had soon an army of two thousand five hundred men assembled on the banks of the Humber. They apprehended that the borders would be strongly armed, and therefore they took their way by sea in a small fleet, which set sail from Ravenspur, an obscure port, and soon landed at Kinghorn, in Fifeshire. The Scots, who detested the Baliols as pretenders under the patronage and for the ultimate purposes of England, flocked in thousands to the national standard against him. The earl of Fife, too precipitately attacking Baliol's force, was at once defeated, and the invaders marched northward towards Dupplin. Near this place the Regent Mar lay with an army said to number forty thousand men. The river Earn lay between the hostile hosts, and it was evidently the policy of the Scots to delay a general engagement till the earl of March, who was rapidly advancing from the

south of Scotland, came up, when the handful of English must have been surrounded and overpowered. But Baliol, or his allies the English barons, perceived this danger clearly enough, and they suddenly crossed the river in the night, before they could be taken in the rear by March. They found the Scots, confident in their numbers, carelessly sleeping without sentries or outposts, and falling upon them in the dark, made a terrible slaughter amongst them. In the morning the Scots, who had fled in confusion, perceived the insignificant force to which they had yielded, and returned with fury to retrieve their character, but they again committed the crime of over-confidence, came on in great disorder, and engaged without regard to the nature of the ground, which was greatly in favour of the enemy, and were once more defeated with huge slaughter. Many thousands of the Scots were driven into the river and were drowned, were actually smothered by tumbling over each other in the chaotic flight, or were cut to pieces. The regent himself, the earl of Carrick, a natural son of Robert Bruce, the earls of Athol and Monteith, and the lords Hay of Erroll, Keith, and Lindsey were slain. With them fell from twelve thousand to thirteen thousand men, while Baliol lost only about thirty; a sufficient proof of the rawness of the Scotch forces, and the frightful panic amongst them. The battle of Dupplin Moor was one of the most sanguinary and complete defeats which the Scots ever suffered, and appeared to obliterate all the glories and benefits of Bannockburn.

The victorious army marched direct on Perth, which it quickly reduced. Baliol was rapidly pursued by the earl of March and Sir Archibald Douglas, whose united armies still amounted to near forty thousand men. They blockaded Perth both by land and water, and proposed to reduce it by famine. But Baliol's ships attacked the Scottish ones, gained a complete victory, and thus opened the communication with Perth from the sea. This compelled the Scots to disband for want of provisions to maintain a long siege. The adherents of Baliol's family, and all those who in any such crisis are ready to fall to the winning power, now came flocking in; the nation was actually conquered by this handful of men, and Baliol, on the 24th of September, 1332, was crowned king of Scotland at Scone. David and his young betrothed queen were sent off for security to the castle of Dumbarton; the Bruce party solicited a truce, which was granted; and thus in little more than a month Baliol had won a kingdom.

But the success of Edward Baliol was as unreal as a dream; he was a mere phantom king. The Scottish patriots were in possession of many of the strongest places in the kingdom, while the adherents of Edward Baliol, each hastening to secure the property he was in pursuit of, the forces of the new monarch were rapidly reduced in number; and he saw plainly that he could only maintain the position of the throne of Scotland by the support of the king of England. He hastened, therefore, to do homage to him for the Scottish crown, and proposed to marry Joan, the sister of the king, the affianced bride of the dethroned David, if the pope's consent to the dissolution of that marriage could be obtained. Edward listened to this, but the prompt removal of the royal pair from Dumbarton castle to France, and the defeat of Baliol, which as promptly followed, annihilated that unprincipled scheme. No sooner were these scandalous proposals known in Scotland, than a spirit of intense indignation fired the minds of the patriotic nobles. The successors of those great men who had achieved the freedom of Scotland under Robert Bruce, John Randolph, second son of the regent; Sir Archibald Douglas, the younger brother of the good lord James; Sir William Douglas, a natural son of the lord James, possessor of the castle of Hermitage in Liddesdale, and thence called the knight of Liddesdale, a valiant and wealthy man, but fierce, cruel, and treacherous; and Sir Andrew Murray of Bothwell, who had married Christiana, the sister of Robert Bruce, and aunt of the young king David,—were the chiefs and leaders of the nation. They suddenly assembled a force, and attacked Baliol, who was feasting at Annan in Dumfriesshire, where he had gone to keep his Christmas. On the night of the 16th of December a body of horse under Sir Archibald, the young earl of Moray, and Sir Simon Frazer, made a dash into the town to surprise him; and he only escaped by springing upon a horse without any saddle, and himself nearly without clothes, leaving behind him his brother Henry slain. His reign had only lasted about three months. He escaped to England and to Edward, who received him kindly. The Scotch borderers, elated with this success, rushed in numbers into England, there committing their usual excesses, and thus furnishing Edward with a valid plea for attacking Scotland, and inducing the parliament to support him in it, which before it had hesitated to do. Edward marched northward with an army not numerous, but well armed and disciplined, and in the month of May, 1333, invested Berwick, defended by Sir William Keith and a strong garrison.

Sir Andrew Murray, the regent, and the knight of Liddesdale were taken prisoners in some of the skirmishes, and Sir Archibald being immediately named regent in the place of Murray, advanced with a large army to relieve Sir William Keith, who had engaged to surrender Berwick if not succoured by the 20th at sunrise. On the 19th Douglas, after a severe march, arrived at an eminence called Halidon Hill, a mile or more north of Berwick. It had been the plan of Douglas to avoid a pitched battle with so powerful an enemy, and to endeavour to wear him out by a system of skirmishes and surprises, but the impatience of his soldiers overruled his caution. His army was drawn up on the slope of the hill, and Edward moved with all his force from Berwick to attack them. The ground, now fine, solid, and cultivated land, is represented then to have been extremely boggy. The Scots, however, dashed through the bogs, and then up the hill at the English, whose archers received them with a steady and murderous discharge of arrows. "The arrows," says Tytler (quoting from an old manuscript), "flew thick as motes in the sunbeams, and the Scots fell to the ground by thousands." Douglas dismounted his heavy-armed cavalry to give firmness and impetus to the charge. The earl of Ross led on the infantry, and king Edward at his side fought on foot in front of the battle. The Scots, though they fought desperately, yet, as, from the marshy ground, they could not come near the archers, and were out of breath with running up the hill, were thrown into confusion and gave way. The English cavalry under the king, but still more a body of Irish auxiliaries under lord Darcy, pursued fiercely, giving little quarter. The slaughter was terrible, amounting to thirty thousand Scots, and—if the accounts are to believed—only one knight, an esquire, and thirteen private

soldiers of the English fell. Nearly the whole of the Scottish nobles and officers were killed or made prisoners. Amongst the slain were Douglas, the regent himself, the earls of Ross, Sutherland, and Monteith. Berwick surrendered, and Edward once more overran the country. He again seized and garrisoned the castles, again exacted public homage from Baliol, and compelled him to cede Berwick, Dunbar, Roxburgh, Edinburgh, and all the south-east counties of Scotland—the best and most fertile portion of the kingdom—which were declared to be made part and parcel of England. Such were the consequences of the fatal battle of Halidon Hill.

Edward left an army of Irish and English to support his wretched vassal in his fragment of a kingdom; but no sooner did he turn homewards than the indignant Scots drove Baliol from even that, and compelled him to seek refuge amongst the English garrisons of the south of Scotland. In the following years, 1335 and 1336, Edward was again obliged to make fresh expeditions into Scotland to

Mortimer's Hole, Nottingham Castle.

support Baliol. Whenever the English king appeared the Scots retired to their mountain fastnesses, while Edward and his army overran the country with little opposition, burnt the houses, and laid waste the lands of those whom he styled rebels; but, whenever he returned to England, they came forth again only the more embittered against the contemptible minion of the English king, the more determined against the tyranny of England. The regent, Sir Andrew Murray, pursued with untiring activity Baliol and his adherents. When Edward marched homeward to spend in London the Christmas of 1336 he left Scotland to all appearance perfectly prostrate, and flattered himself that it was completely subdued. Never was it further from such a condition. One spirit only animated the Scottish nation, that of eternal resistance to the monarch who had inflicted on it such calamities, and set a slave on its throne. The Scots sought and were furnished assistance from France; and now came the diversion from that quarter which proved the salvation of Scotland; now began to work the seeds sown, the elements infused into the English monarchy by Edward I.'s unprincipled abandonment of his engagement with count Guy of Flanders for the marriage of his daughter Philippa with Edward of Caernarvon, and his alliance, for political purposes, with France. Edward now claimed the throne of France in right of his mother, and prepared to enforce that claim by his arms. Hence came those long and bloody wars with France which produced an hereditary enmity between the two nations, and by this means, the attention and resources of England divided in the vain attempt to subjugate both France and Scotland, insured the ultimate loss of both those countries. The ambition of Edward overshot itself. Had he confined his efforts to either of those great objects, he might have succeeded. By far the most important was the annexation of Scotland. It was a truly statesmanlike aim to make one consolidated kingdom of the island; but Edward, with all his talents, had no conception of the manner in which this was to be effected. If Scotland were to be won by arms, the whole of those arms should have been concentrated on that object alone. But it never could be effected by that means; it required a higher development of political wisdom and respect for international rights than were then arrived at. Before we enter, however, on the narrative of the great French contest, we must mention a few facts which show the state to which Scotland was reduced at this time, and the invincible courage of the people, which called out singular displays of it, even by the women.

After the fatal battle of Halidon Hill, throughout all Scotland only four castles and one small tower held out for David Bruce. The castles of Lochleven, Kildrummie, and Dunbar, three out of the four, were distinguished by sieges which deserve notice. Lochleven castle stood on an island, in the loch or lake of that name, at Kinross, in Fifeshire. It was held by Alan Vipont, and was besieged by Sir John Stirling with an English army. As the island is low, Stirling thought he could draw out the garrison by blocking

THE TROOPS OF LORD MONTACUTE IN THE SUBTERRANEAN PASSAGE. (See page 363.)

up the outlet to the loch. This was effected by throwing stones and earth into the small river Leven, till a huge mound was raised. But Vipont, aware of what was doing, sent in the night a boat with four men, who cut through the mound, so that the confined waters broke forth with fury, and swept away the tents, baggage, and troops of the besiegers. The remains of this mound are pointed out to this day.

The castle of Kildrummie, which played so conspicuous a part in the war of Edward I., was now defended by Christian Bruce, who, as we have said, was married to Sir Andrew Murray, now regent. It was one of the chief places of refuge for the patriots, and therefore was besieged by David Hastings, earl of Atholl, one of the disinherited lords. Sir Andrew Murray determined to march to the relief of his wife. He called to his assistance the knight of Liddesdale, who had been in captivity with him in England, Sir Alexander Ramsay, of Dalwolsy, and the earl of March. They could only raise a thousand men, and Atholl had three thousand. But while on march they were joined by one John Craig, a royalist of Scotland who had been released by Atholl from confinement on promise of a large ransom. This ransom was due on the morrow, and Craig was unable or unwilling to pay it. He was glad to get rid of Atholl, and therefore undertook to lead them through the forest of Braemar, so as to take Atholl by surprise. On the way the people of the neighbourhood also joined them. Atholl was greatly startled by suddenly perceiving the enemy upon him, but he disdained to fly. There was a small brook between him and the Scots, and the knight of Liddesdale keeping his men from crossing it, Atholl rushed over to attack them, when Liddesdale cried out, "Now is our time!" charged down the hill, bore Atholl and his forces back into the brook, and slew the earl and dispersed his force, thus entirely relieving the castle. This was called the battle of Kiblene, and greatly noticed by the Scots as fought on St. Andrew's day, 1335.

Another of the most remarkable defences of these castles was that of Dunbar by the countess of March. She was the daughter of the renowned Thomas Randolph, first earl of Moray, of that family whose exploits we have recounted, and from her complexion was called Black Agnes. The castle of Dunbar was extremely strong, being built on a chain of rocks running into the sea, and the only connection with the main was land well fortified. Montague, earl of Salisbury, besieged her, and brought forward engines to throw stones, such as were used to batter down walls before the invention of cannon. One of these, with a strong roof to defend the assailants, standing up like a hog's back, was called the sow. When Black Agnes saw this engine advancing, she called out to the earl of Salisbury, in derision,

"Beware Montagow,
For farrow shall thy sow."

She had ordered a huge stone to be set on the wall over the castle gate, and as soon as the sow came under this was let fall, by which means the roof of the machine was crushed in, and as the English soldiers ran out, they were shot down by a flight of arrows; whereupon the Black Agnes shouted out to Salisbury, "Behold the litter of English pigs!"

As the earl brought up fresh engines and sent ponderous stones against her battlements, Black Agnes stood there, and wiped disdainfully the fragments of the broken battlements away with her handkerchief, as a matter of no moment. The earl riding near to reconnoitre, an arrow meant for him shot down a man at his side. "That," said the earl, "is one of my lady's love tokens. Black Agnes's love shafts pierce to the heart."

The countess next tried to inveigle the earl into her power. She sent a fellow into the English camp who pretended to betray the castle. The earl was caught by the trick, and came at midnight to the gates, which were to be opened to him by the traitor. Opened they were; but one John Copland, the earl's esquire, riding in before him, the guards were too quick; they dropped the portcullis, thinking the earl had entered, and so shut him out and betrayed their stratagem.

Black Agnes was at length relieved by Sir Alexander Ramsay of Dalwolsy, who brought up forces both by sea and land; and the Scots, delighted with the spirit of the undaunted defendress of the castle, celebrated her far and wide in their minstrel songs. One of these sufficiently portrays the character of this Scottish amazon:—

"That brawling, boisterous, Scottish wench
Kept such a stir in towers and trench,
That, came I early or came I late,
I found Black Agnes in the gate."

The brave Sir Andrew Murray, the regent, died in 1338, while this contest was raging on all sides. He had discharged his office with the greatest spirit, patriotism, and wisdom, and his death was a severe loss to the country. Sir Walter Scott has drawn a dismal picture of the state of Scotland at this period:—"The condition of Scotland was most miserable. There was no finding refuge in the laws at a time when everything was decided by the strongest arm and the longest sword. There was no use in raising crops, when the man who sowed them was not, in all probability, permitted to reap the grain. There was little religious devotion where so much violence prevailed; and the hearts of the people became so much inclined to acts of blood and fury that all laws of humanity and charity were transgressed without scruple. People were found starved to death in the woods, with their families; while the country was so depopulated and void of cultivation that the wild deer came out of the remote forests, and approached near to the cities and the dwellings of men. Whole families were reduced to eat grass, and others, it is said, found a more horrible aliment in the flesh of their fellow-creatures. One wretch used to set traps for human beings as for wild beasts, and subsisted on their flesh. This cannibal was called Christian of the Cleek, from the cleek, or hook, which he used in his horrid traps."

In the midst of all these horrors, whenever there was any truce between the contending parties, the knights on both sides used to meet and hold jousts and tournaments.

CHAPTER LXIV.

Preparations for War with France—The utter Groundlessness of Edward III.'s Claims on the French Crown—Alliance with the Princes of Germany and the Netherlands—Artavelde, the Brewer of Ghent—Counter-alliances made by Philip of France—The first Invasion of France abortive—Edward's Debts and Difficulties at Home—Renews the War—Great Naval Victory of Edward at Sluys—Siege of Tournay—A Truce—Fresh Troubles at Home—Resistance of the Clergy—The Affairs of Brittany—Renewed War—Second Truce—Fresh Invasion of France—Great Victory of Cregy—War with Scotland—Capture of Calais.

We are now arrived at a crisis in our history which marks at once the valour and the unscrupulous ambition of the English kings. There is no period of our annals in

which the bravery of our countrymen assumed a more marvellous character, or in which it was displayed in a more unjust cause. Whenever we would boast of the martial ascendancy of the nation, we are sure to pronounce the words Creçy and Poictiers, but we are quite as certainly silent as to the political merits of the contest in which those names became celebrated. The invasions of France by Edward III. raised the martial glory of England to the highest pitch. There is nothing in the miracles of bravery done at Leuctra, Marathon, or Thermopylæ which can surpass those performed at Creçy, Poictiers, and on other occasions; but there the splendour of the parallel ends. The Greek battle-fields are sanctified by the imperishable renown of patriotism; those of England, at that period, are distinguished only by empty ambition and unwarrantable aggression. The Greeks fought and conquered for the very existence of their country and their liberties; the English, to crush those of an independent people. The wars commenced by Edward III. inflicted the most direful miseries on France, were continued for generations, and perpetuated a spirit of hostility between the two great neighbour countries, which has been prolific of bloodshed, and most injurious to the progress of liberty and civilisation. The contest, as far as Edward III. was concerned, ended with a formal renunciation of his pretensions on the French crown, and in the acquisition of nothing but the town and district of Calais and Guisnes, destined to be lost, at a future day, with every other English fief and freehold in France.

The impolicy of Edward III. was equal to his spirit of aggression. He was not content to attempt the complete subjugation of Scotland, which his grandfather had invaded on pleas as empty as his own regarding France, and where, during the wars of three reigns, all the power and wealth of England had been put forth, only to prove that you may exterminate a brave people, but you cannot conquer it. While he was no nearer the real annexation of Scotland than his grandfather was the first day that he advanced beyond Berwick, he aspired to coerce a still more extensive empire. The real source of this great movement was merely military ambition. Edward was a conqueror in spirit and genius, and his history is that of all the class, from Alexander of Macedon to Napoleon Bonaparte, who leave to their nations, not the territories for which they fought, but that phantom of splendour, that popular and perpetual fascination, a great name!

Edward claimed to be the rightful heir to the crown of France through his mother. But it had always been held in that country that no female could succeed to the throne: no such occurrence had ever taken place. It was declared that this succession was prohibited by a clause in the Salic code—the code of an ancient tribe among the Franks. This clause, when carefully examined by the highest legal antiquaries, has been asserted not to bear out this principle of exclusion positively, but only to favour such exclusion. On this presumption, however, the French nation had uniformly acted for nearly a thousand years. The ancient Franks were too barbarous and turbulent to submit to a female ruler, and those who succeeded them steadily pursued the same practice, passing over female heirs, and placing on the throne men in their stead. The third race of French kings had transmitted the crown in this manner from Hugh Capet to Louis Hutin, for eleven generations; during which period no female, nor any male even who founded his title on a female, had been suffered to mount the throne.

Edward asserted that in England and in other countries such claim was always considered valid; that a son could and would succeed to his mother as well as to his father; and this view of the case was supported by the government lawyers of England and some jurists abroad in English pay; but, then, the succession was not to take place in England, but in France, whose whole history and practice were opposed to it. The French maintained, and truly, that it was a fundamental law that no foreigner could reign in France; and that it was a chief object of this law to exclude the husbands and children of those princesses of France who married foreigners. To put the matter still further beyond question, the parliament of France, in the time of Philip the Long, had passed a solemn and deliberate decree, declaring expressly that all females were for ever incapable of succeeding to the crown of France.

What right, then, had Edward to dictate to the French nation his own views in opposition to theirs? None whatever. By custom, the usage of nearly a thousand years, and by express recent law, the principle of the French nation was clearly established. True, Edward was nearer in blood to the throne than Philip of Valois, who had now succeeded. He claimed from his mother, who was daughter of the fourth preceding king, Philip the Fair, and sister of the three preceding kings; while Philip de Valois was only cousin-german to the deceased king, Charles le Bel. But all this the laws and practice of France pronounced to amount to nothing. That no female could succeed, or could transmit succession to her offspring, over that there was no passing legally; and if Edward had succeeded in proving a valid claim from the female side, he would only have proved his own exclusion; for the last three kings had all left daughters who were still alive, and who all stood before him in the order of succession.

In a legal point of view, then, Edward had not a leg to stand upon in this question, whether as a king of French or of English descent; for no race of monarchs had made such arbitrary work with succession as the kings of England, from the Conqueror downwards. Besides this, Edward, according to all the laws of honour and of nations then prevailing, had practically renounced any claims of the kind which he might pretend to. The French king had succeeded to the throne in 1329. The peers of the realm had declared the crown his. The parliament of Paris, and after that the states general of the kingdom had confirmed their judgment; and not only all France, but all Europe had recognised him as rightful possessor of the throne. In 1331 the king of France called upon Edward to come over and do homage for his province of Guienne. Philip, who was an able man, and of years of experience, was too prudent to allow any one to retain the shadow of a claim against him. He lost no time in summoning so powerful a rival as the king of England to do that homage which would at once cut off any real claim, had it existed, and on Edward seeming to hang back was preparing to seize his fief by force of arms as forfeited. To have refused to yield this feudal homage would have been virtually to renounce his right to the province, or to involve him in a war with this powerful monarch. He, therefore, went over to France, having first, as if that would have any legal or rightful effect, secretly in his own council entered a

protest against this act prejudicing his own claims on the French crown through his mother. Such have often been the private reservations by which kings and other men have sought to give a plea to their own consciences for the violation of the most public and binding acts.

Edward was at that time about eighteen years of age, brave and ambitious. He was attended by a splendid retinue of peers and knights, and was met by the king of France with a similarly imposing train. The act of homage was publicly performed in the cathedral of Amiens. Edward appeared in a robe of crimson velvet, embroidered with leopards of gold. He came wearing his armour, girt with his sword, and with his golden spurs of knighthood on his heels. Philip of France received him seated in a chair of state, before which was placed a cushion for the king of England to kneel upon. No doubt, as this act implied vassalage, so far as any lands in France were concerned, every precaution was taken that so powerful a monarch of a neighbouring nation, and a suspected rival, should make no equivocal submission. Edward, on his part, was careful to give none but the smallest and most indispensable tokens of dependence, and refused to kneel. On this the grand chamberlain of France, unquestionably well instructed beforehand by his royal master, not only insisted that he should kneel, but that he should perform his homage by laying aside his regal ornaments, his sword and girdle and spurs. His anger at this humiliating demand before the assembled chivalry and high-born ladies of France was excessive; but no remonstrance could move the grand chamberlain, and he was obliged to submit, and kneel bare-headed and stripped of all the marks of his royal rank. There can be no doubt that his indignation at this proceeding whetted his enmity against Philip de Valois, and led in no trifling degree to his future terrible invasions of his kingdom. Yet it was not till 1336, five years afterwards, and seven after Philip had sat quietly on his throne, that he openly declared the superiority of his own claims to it, and his determination to assert them.

The king of England had just cause of quarrel with Philip of France, which might deserve chastisement, but could afford no ground for an attempt to dethrone him. He had repeatedly sent money and men to the aid of the Scots, and to pave the way for the return of the young king and queen, who were exiles in France. But the immediate instigator of this enterprise was the brother-in-law of Philip, Robert of Artois, who had justly incurred the king's resentment, and had fled the country in disguise. This Robert, count of Artois, was a man of a fiery temper, and unprincipled. He had married the king's sister; and being in high favour with him, hoped to prevail upon him to reverse the acts of Philip the Fair, which had prevented his succession to the earldom of Artois. Robert was undoubtedly the male heir; but his aunt Matilda being married to Otho, duke of Burgundy, and his two daughters to two sons of Philip the Fair, that monarch adjudged the county of Artois to the heir female, and this judgment was confirmed by Philip the Long. The count had clearly just cause of complaint, and on the death of Charles the Fair he zealously supported the claims of Philip of Valois, and hoped, from the services which he then rendered, as well as from his alliance by marriage, that the king would now reverse this settlement of the county of Artois in his favour. Philip, however, though he held the count in the highest favour, and consulted him on all occasions of state, yet declined to reverse the decisions of his two predecessors, and satisfied himself with conferring on him the earldom of Beaumont le Roger.

But this by no means contented Robert of Artois. He forged a will as that of his grandfather, settling the county upon him, and presented it to the king. Philip, who instantly recognised the forgery, denounced so mean and criminal an act in no measured terms; and the count retired, muttering that he who placed the crown on Philip's head knew how to take it off again. These words being reported to Philip, he appeared to have lost all command of himself: he denounced and condemned the count for forgery, degraded him from all honours and offices, confiscated his property, and banished him from France. His rage did not stop there. He seized and imprisoned the count's wife, though his own sister, on pretence of her cognisance of the fraud; burnt at the stake a woman of the house of Bethune, as the actual framer of the deed, and as having practised by sorcery against the king's life. He still pursued the fugitive count, by interfering to prevent his stay in Brabant, where he had taken refuge.

However righteous might be this indignation, it was far from politic, for Robert of Artois was a very able man, and was thus driven into the arms of Edward of England, where he proved a most formidable and most persevering enemy. He exerted all his art and persuasion with Edward to assert his title to the crown of France. The king and Robert were united by no common principle, except that of professed resentment against the king of France, and of having just claims in his country; though one was excluded by male heirship and the other by female. The king of France, sensible of the mischief the count might create in the English court against him, called upon Edward to expel him from the country, and threatened, in case of refusal, to fall upon Guienne. This only added to the anger of Edward and to the ostensible motives of invasion. The king of France issued a sentence of felony and attainder against the count and against every vassal of his crown who harboured him. Edward retorted the protection which he had given to his enemy, the king of Scots, and commenced active measures for invading France. He made alliances with various princes of the Netherlands and Germany; his father-in-law, the count of Hainault, was his active agent, and very soon were engaged the duke of Brabant, the duke of Gueldres, the archbishop of Cologne, the marquis of Juliers, the count of Namur, the lords of Baquen and Fauquemont, and the people of Flanders. The earl of Flanders adhered to Philip, who also engaged the kings of Navarre and Bohemia, the dukes of Brittany, Austria, and Louvain, the palatine of the Rhine, and some other petty princes of Germany.

Edward expected more efficient aid from the Flemings than from any other of his allies; they had grown rich and considerable through trade, and had dealings with England, whence they received wool, and where they found good customers for their manufactures. They were the first people in the northern countries of Europe who had made progress in the arts and in manufactures, and their self-earned affluence had the usual effect of inspiring them with a spirit of independence. They had resisted and thrown off the oppressions of their nobles, and expelled the earl, who was not disposed to consent to their bold assumptions. A wealthy brewer, Jacob van Artavelde, a sort of Crom-

well of the Netherlands, had, by the force of his character, not only led them on, but placed himself at their head, and now exercised a power equal to that of any sovereign. To him Edward applied to enlist the Flemings in his favour; and though he was himself as deeply imbued as any man living with the feudal spirit and all its ideas of the subserviency of the people, in this case it was convenient to overlook it. Van Artavelde entered heartily into Edward's views, and inspired his countrymen with them, who had a great dislike to Philip of France because he had supported their earl against them. He invited Edward over to Flanders, and promised him vigorous aid.

Edward, before embarking in this serious undertaking, called for the advice of his parliament, and solicited its support, which was promptly given. It voted him twenty thousand sacks of wool, the very commodity of all others acceptable to the Flemings, and of the supposed value of a hundred thousand pounds. With the price of this wool he could also pay his German allies. Besides this grant, he levied a heavy contribution on the tin of Cornwall, pawned the jewels of the crown, and raised money by all possible means, amongst others, seizing on the property of the Lombards, who now exercised the trade of money-lending formerly carried on by the Jews. With a numerous fleet, he set sail from Orwell, in Suffolk, on the 15th of July, 1338, attended by a considerable body of English troops and some of his nobility.

On landing at Antwerp he found it difficult to move his various allies, who, like continental allies in all ages, were much fonder of receiving their subsidies than of fighting. The Germans demurred to advance against France except by authority of the emperor of Germany, who, therefore, conferred on Edward the title of vicar of the empire. The Flemings, who were vassals of France, had like scruples to combat, which were eventually overcome by Edward assuming, at the instigation of Van Artavelde, the style of king of France, and, under plea of the right it conferred, claiming their aid in deposing Philip of Valois as the usurper of his realm.

By this act Edward made that breach between this country and France which it has taken so many ages to heal, and which has been the spring of incalculable miseries to both countries. Till then, the nobility, coming originally from Normandy, were to be found almost as frequently at the English court as at that of France, and the two countries seemed little different from the wide empire of one people under two or more sovereigns. In this fatal epoch, however, that unanimity was destroyed, and rivalries, animosities, and rivers of blood took its place.

This step was not taken by Edward without great misgivings and reluctance; and no sooner was it made, than his allies began to show symptoms of backwardness. The duke of Brabant, the most powerful amongst the princes, seemed inclined wholly to withdraw from his alliance, and could be only held to his engagements by fresh privileges of trade being granted to his subjects, and a marriage contracted between the Black Prince and the daughter of the duke. To move the Germans, who were only concerned to get as much of the king's money as possible, he found it necessary to promise an attack on Cambray, a city of the empire which Philip had seized upon, or, in other words, to pay them for allowing him to fight their own battles. Finding that tho attempt was useless, he then led his allies to the frontiers of France, where many of them threw off all pretence of doing that for which they had been so liberally paid, and refused to fight against France. Amongst these were the count of Namur and the count of Hainault, Edward's own brother-in-law (the old count being dead), who now discovered that they were vassals of France, and could not possibly direct their arms against it. We do not read that on this discovery they attempted to refund the money they had pocketed for this very purpose.

Deserted by these mercenaries, Edward, however, still advanced and entered France, encamping at Vironfosse near Capelle, with fifty thousand men, chiefly foreigners. Philip came against him with an army of nearly twice that amount, consisting of his own subjects, and having the advantage of being accompanied, blessed, and encouraged by the Pope; a most inspiriting circumstance in that age. Benedict II. lived then at Avignon, and was a dependent on France, besides being incensed at Edward making an alliance with Ludvig of Bavaria, who lay under the ban of his excommunication. Edward marched as far as Peronne and St. Quentin, burning the villages and laying waste the country. The French king, however, avoided hazarding an engagement, and Edward, having made a detour by the Ardennes, found his armies exhausted, and returned to Ghent. There Benedict endeavoured to negotiate a peace between the two monarchs; but Edward, spite of the utter failure of his campaign, refused to listen to it. Yet his situation was pitiable, and his feelings could be by no means enviable. He had consumed and, indeed, anticipated, his whole year's revenue; he had seized largely on the substance of his subjects, had pawned everything belonging to himself and his queen, and was now in a manner in pawn himself, for he had incurred debts to his miserable, useless allies to the amount of three hundred thousand pounds. They would not allow him to return to England even to raise fresh resources without leaving his queen behind as a pledge of his return. Thus all his grand undertaking had ended in worse than smoke; in nothing whatever performed, and in formidable engagements incurred.

In February, 1340, he managed to get over to England where nothing but difficulties and mortifications awaited him. He had sent over during the campaign to obtain fresh supplies from parliament through his son, whom he had left guardian. Parliament offered to grant him thirty thousand more sacks of wool, but then they demanded in return that the king should make considerable abatements both of royal licence and prerogative. The king had caused sheriffs and other placemen to be elected into parliament to increase his facility of obtaining grants. This stretch of power the parliament very properly insisted should cease, and to that the king consented; but they went on next to demand that the ancient privileges of purveyance and levying of feudal aids, for knighting the king's eldest son and marrying his eldest daughter, should be abolished. There the king demurred; these were his ancient rights, and not all his necessities, and the temptation of the thirty thousand sacks of wool, could induce him to sacrifice them. When he appeared in person, he obtained better terms, but not without a struggle. Parliament now called for a confirmation of the two charters, which the kings of those ages were always breaking, and which Edward had to confirm fifteen times in the course of his reign. This, there-

fore, he probably considered no great matter; but parliament also asked for a confirmation of the privileges of boroughs, a pardon for old debts and offences, and some reforms in the administration of the common law. In return for these concessions, it offered him the liberal supplies of a ninth fleece, lamb, and sheep, and the same of the moveables of the burgesses; as well as a duty of forty shillings on each last of leather, on each sack of wool, and on each three hundred sheepskins exported, for two years; and because these would come in too slowly, they gave him twenty thousand sacks of wool at once, to be deducted from these taxes. Parliament also took a very prudent precaution, in affording him the sinews of war, to protest against the assumption of the title of king of France, declaring that they owed him no obeisance as king of France, and that the kingdoms must for ever remain separate and independent of each other.

While the king was making these preparations for the renewal of the war, Philip of France was using strenuous exertions to collect a fleet powerful enough to prevent his landing. He had sought this aid from the Genoese, at that time the great maritime power; as we shall soon find that he had also employed them, to a great extent, as archers in his army. The fleet numbered four hundred sail, manned by Genoese sailors, and containing an army of forty thousand men; that is, about one hundred men on an average to a vessel; from which we may form some idea of the smallness of the ships of those times. Edward, informed of this, collected also a fleet; with which, though consisting of only two hundred and forty sail, he was impatient to set out and engage that of his rival. His council advised him to wait till he had a force more equal; but Edward set out on the 22nd of June, many English ladies going over in other vessels to pay their respects to the queen. On the 24th the English fleet was off the harbour of Sluys, in Flanders, and there found the French fleet lying to prevent their disembarkation. Their masts and streamers, says Froissart, appeared like a wood. When Edward saw them, he exclaimed, "Ha! I have long desired to fight the French, and now I will do it, by the grace of God and St. George."

The next morning, having placed the vessels bearing the ladies at such a distance that they might see the battle in safety, Edward, with the instinctive address of a British naval captain, manœuvred so as to get the wind of the enemy. This movement being mistaken by the French for a sign of fear in the king, induced them to come pouring out of the harbour; by which Edward gained another object which he sought, that of having them more in his power of attack. The battle commenced at ten in the morning, and lasted nine hours. During the fight the Genoese showered in upon the English their arrows from their deadly crossbows; but they were briskly answered by the long bows of the English; and when all the arrows were spent, they seized each others' ships with grappling irons and chains, and the men-at-arms fought hand to hand with swords and axes as if on land. The English, fighting in the presence and under the daring example of their king, displayed the utmost courage, and finally victory decided for them. They took or destroyed nearly the whole of the French fleet. Fifteen thousand of the enemy, some authors say more, were killed, or perished in the sea. To make the catastrophe the more complete, the Flemings, seeing the battle incline for the English, rushed down to the shore in great numbers, and cut off the retreat of the French, making terrible slaughter amongst them. Edward then accomplished his landing with the greatest *éclat*, inspiring his allies with some temporary spirit.

This is a remarkable engagement, being the first great naval victory of England, the first brilliant proof of that maritime ascendency which awaited this country. So great was the defeat of the French, that no one dared to breathe a syllable of it in the hearing of Philip; and it was only made known to him by the court jester. Some one speaking of the English, "Pho!" said the fool; "the English are but cowards." "Why so?" said the king. "Because," added the fool, "they did not dare the other day at Sluys to leap into the sea from their ships like the French and Normans."

Edward had lost about four thousand men himself in the battle, but still he had no lack of followers. The splendour of this victory, and the fame of the large sums which he had brought with him, gathered his allies about him like swarms of locusts. Nearly two hundred thousand men advanced with him towards the French frontiers, but achieved nothing of consequence. Of these, fifty thousand, under Robert of Artois, laid siege to St. Omer. A single sally of the governor was enough to squander these untutored forces; and notwithstanding the abilities of Robert of Artois, they could never again be collected. Edward invested Tournay, which was defended by a strong garrison; and when reduced to distress, Philip appeared with a large army, but avoided coming to action. Edward, provoked at this caution, sent him a challenge to single combat, which he declined. While the armies lay in this position, and Edward had wasted ten weeks, effecting nothing and paying his numerous army of useless allies, Jane, countess of Hainault, sister to Philip, and mother-in-law of Edward, came forward as a mediatrix between them. She had retired from the world to a convent; but this destructive quarrel between persons so near to her called her forth to endeavour to reconcile them. Her exertions were seconded by the pope and cardinal; but all that they could effect was a truce for one year.

Philip managed soon after to win over the emperor of Germany, who revoked Edward's title of imperial vicar, and his other allies rapidly withdrew as his money failed. He was now harassed by them as most importunate creditors, and was glad to steal away to England, where he arrived in the worst of humours. He had involved himself deeply in debt, and had achieved nothing but his naval victory. The anger which was excited by his foreign creditors fell on his subjects at home. Landing unexpectedly, he found the Tower very negligently guarded, and he immediately committed the constable and all in charge of it to prison. He then let his vengeance fall on the officers of the revenue, and collectors of the taxes, who had so greatly failed him in his need. Sir John St. Paul, keeper of the privy seal, Sir John Stonore, chief justice, and Andrew Aubrey, mayor of London, were displaced and imprisoned, as were also the bishops of Chichester and Lichfield, the chancellor and treasurer. Stratford, archbishop of Canterbury, to whom the charge of collecting the new taxes had chiefly been entrusted, also fell under his displeasure; but he assumed an attitude of defiance, threatening excom-

THE BATTLE OF SLUYS. (See page 372.)

munication against any one daring to execute these which he termed illegal arrests, and appealed to Magna Charta in behalf of himself and brethren. The king appointed commissioners to inquire into the guilt of all concerned. He issued a proclamation, accusing the archbishop of having embezzled or misapplied the taxes intended for the king's use. The archbishop denied the charge, and, supported by the clergy in a regular combination against the king, accused him of arbitrary acts and infringements of the constitution, telling him that the favour of the church was higher than that of the state, inasmuch as the priests had to answer at the Divine tribunal for the conduct of kings themselves, and reminding him that prelates before then had cited emperors to their seats of judgment. This dispute was carried on with great heat on both sides; but the king, driven by the clamours of his creditors, was obliged to call a parliament; and, though he omitted to summon Stratford, the archbishop appeared before the gates arrayed in full pontificals, with crosier in hand, and attended by an imposing train of bishops and priests. He demanded admittance as the highest peer of the realm; but it was not till Edward had kept him there two days that he admitted him, and even became reconciled to him.

The king's necessities no doubt made him give way, for he had difficulties sufficient without the opposition of the clergy. He was overwhelmed with debts, for which he was paying ruinous interest, and was worried both by his foreign and domestic creditors. His attempts on France, which had brought him into this humiliating condition, had proved utter failures. Parliament declined to assist him, except on its usual conditions of fresh restrictions on his power. The barons claimed that peers should only be tried by peers; they called for a new subscription of the Great Charter; they demanded that no offices should be filled, except by the advice of his council; and that, at the commencement of every session, he should resume all offices, in order to inquire into their faithful discharge. Edward, as was his wont, signed all these and other demands, obtained his grant of twenty thousand more sacks of wool, and then declared that the conditions to which he had agreed were void, because they had been extorted.

It was hoped that the truce which had been entered into between France and England might be succeeded by a peace. Edward's total want of success might naturally have been expected to incline him to it; but he claimed exemption from rendering homage for Guienne, and that Philip should cease to support the king of Scots against him. Neither of these points would Philip yield, when an event took place which renewed the war with fresh spirit, and with the most wonderful change of fortune.

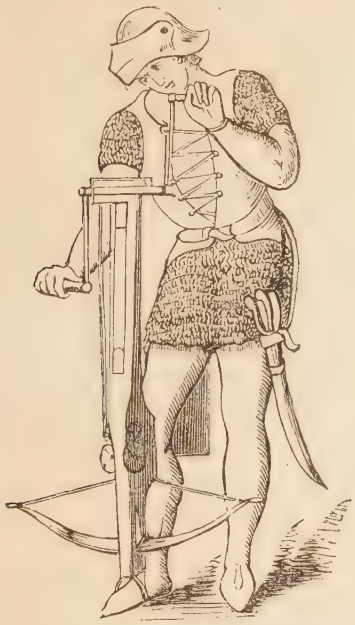
This event was the disputed succession to the dukedom of Brittany. John III., duke of that province, died in April, 1341. He had no children, but, desiring that his niece Jane, the daughter of his younger but deceased brother Guy, count of Penthièvre, should succeed him, he had married her to Charles of Blois, nephew of the king of France. Before doing this, he had assembled the states of Brittany, who had fully assented; all his vassals, and amongst them John de Montfort, the son of his also deceased brother Arthur. But, though John de Montfort had not dared to oppose the will of his uncle during his lifetime, no sooner was he dead than he asserted his own higher claim to the duchy. He was, in fact, the true heir male. While Charles of Blois was at the court of France, soliciting the investiture of the duchy, John de Montfort rode at once to Nantes, took possession of the late duke's house and treasures, prevailed on the chief barons and bishops to recognise his right, and made himself master of Brest, Rennes, Hennebon, and other towns and fortresses.

De Montfort, convinced that Philip would take part with his own kinsman, Charles of Blois, hastened to England, where he did homage to Edward, as the rightful king of France, for the duchy of Brittany, and proposed an alliance for the mutual maintenance of their claims in France. Edward instantly perceived the immense advantages which this new connection would give to his designs on that kingdom. All his enthusiasm for its conquest revived; and this feeling was fanned into flame by Robert of Artois. Edward closed with the offer, and De Montfort returned to Brittany to put it into a state of complete defence. He was speedily summoned to Paris to appear before the parliament called by the king to decide this great cause. De Montfort boldly went; but, finding himself charged with the offence of doing homage to Edward of England as his superior, he took just alarm, and made his escape from the city.

The parliament, as might have been expected, adjudged the duchy to Charles of Blois, declaring that John de Montfort had forfeited whatever claim he might have by his treasonable homage to the king of England. Philip ordered his eldest son to march into Brittany at the head of an army to assist Charles of Blois to expel John de Montfort. Under him, but the actual commander of the forces, was a celebrated warrior, Louis de la Cerda, commonly called Don Louis of Spain; and by his able conduct Nantes was speedily recovered, and De Montfort taken prisoner, sent to Paris, and confined in the Louvre, where he long remained. By this event the claims of De Montfort, and the new hopes of Edward, appeared extinguished together. Charles of Blois considered the war at an end, took possession of Nantes and other towns, and appeared to have before him a very easy business to establish himself in the duchy. But all parties were surprised by a new incident, which very soon gave a more determined character to the contest. Jane, the wife of De Montfort, sister to the earl of Flanders, was in Rennes when her husband was made prisoner at Nantes. She instantly displayed the spirit of a great woman, and, instead of weakly yielding to grief or fear, she immediately assembled the people of Rennes, presented her infant son to them, recommending him to their protection as the last remaining hope of their country, and declared her resolve to defend the duchy to the last against the usurper. She reminded them of the alliance of England, and promised them certain success. The audience, struck with wonder at her courage, and moved to tears by her appeal, vowed to stand by her to the death, and the same spirit animated all the other towns of Brittany. The brave lady, whom Froissart declares "had the courage of a man and the heart of a lion," went from place to place rousing the people, encouraging the garrisons, and seeing that they were well provisioned and placed in a condition of the greatest strength. Finding that she could not hold Rennes against Charles of Blois and the French army, she shut herself up in Hennebon, and awaited succour from England. She despatched to Edward fresh information of her situation, and with it, her son, to be there in a place of

safety, and, as it were, a pledge to the king of England of her fixed determination to defend her cause to the utmost.

Charles of Blois speedily sat down before Hennebon with a great army of French, Bretons, Spaniards, and Genoese,



Genoese Bowman.

and trusted to take the countess prisoner, and so put a real finish to the war. But the countess, inspiriting everybody by her words and example, made a stout defence. She herself put on armour and rode through the streets on a noble charger, exhorting the citizens to show themselves valiant. She was at every post of danger, at the gates or on the walls, where the enemy's arrows fell thickest. The very women, fired by her bravery, cut short their gowns, that they might be the more active, and tearing up the pavement of the streets, carried the stones to the walls, or prepared pots of quicklime and other missiles to discharge on the besiegers. Women of all ranks were seen engaged in these labours without distinction, and the countess continually headed sorties on the enemy. One day, during a long and desperate assault, watching its progress from the walls, she perceived that Charles of Blois had directed such a force against the city, that a part of his camp was quite deserted. She instantly dismounted, called together a body of three hundred brave knights and esquires, and issuing from a gate opposite to that where the French were so intently engaged, she led them, under the cover of some woods and hills, to the unguarded camp, upon which they fell, setting fire to the tents, baggage, and magazines, and doing immense mischief. When the besiegers saw their own quarters in flames, they cried, "Treason! treason!" and rushed to the defence. The brave countess, seeing that her retreat was cut off, instantly adopted her plan, bidding her followers to disband and make their way as they could to Brest. The countess herself galloped off, but was hotly pursued by Don Louis of Spain, as vindictive as he was brave, who came so near her as to kill several of her followers. The countess, however, made good her rendezvous with her followers, and speedily was on her way back at the head, not of three, but of five hundred men. Taking refuge in the castle of Aulray, and watching their opportunity, they left the castle at midnight, reached the neighbourhood of Hennebon at sunrise, and darting past the astonished besiegers, made good their entrance into the city on the sixth day after they had left it. This gallant and successful action on the part of the countess greatly amazed Charles of Blois and his army, and encouraged her own people, who received her with trumpets sounding and every demonstration of triumph.

Still the French pressed on, and the English succours, daily and hourly looked for, did not arrive. The besiegers had already made several breaches in the walls; provisions were growing scarce; the garrison was overwhelmed with fatigue and watching; and, still worse, the bishop of Leon, a friend of Charles of Blois, was in the city, under the double character of an ecclesiastic and an ambassador, and was using all his endeavours to induce the countess to yield the city. His words had the worst effect on the inhabitants. He was continually going about describing the horrors attending a city given up to pillage, and recommending a capitulation. It was surprising that the countess, so quick to perceive her interests in other respects, should have tolerated his mischievous presence there. At length, however, he prevailed on her followers to propose a surrender. The brave countess implored them to wait, assuring them that the English succours must arrive; but the bishop now pressed his advantage; he called the Breton lords together again the next day, and, keeping up his communications with the besiegers without, they drew nearer, with Charles of Blois at their head, in readiness to take possession. The countess in the greatest anxiety kept a constant look out from a tower commanding a view of the sea, and at the very moment when the traitorous bishop of Leon was about to make over the city she descried a large squadron steering towards Hennebon. She immediately shouted:—"Behold the Red Cross! the English succours! No capitulation!" The people of the town all rushed to the ramparts to see the joyful sight. It was indeed the English fleet, which had been detained at sea forty days by contrary winds, but now was coming on with full sail.

All thoughts of surrender of course were abandoned; the disappointed bishop was dismissed to his equally disappointed master; and the English forces, consisting of six thousand archers, and a body of heavy-armed cavalry, under Sir Walter Manny, a Flemish knight, one of the greatest captains of the age, in Edward's service, landing, drove the besiegers back, and entered the town amid the joyful acclamations of the inhabitants. The delighted countess received her deliverers with every courtesy. She admitted the knights and captains into her own castle, decorated with her finest tapestry, and dined herself at table with them. The next day, after dinner, Sir Walter Manny proposed to make a sally and break down the battering rams of the French. The challenge was enthusiastically answered by all the knights and warriors present. They united and rushed forth with three hundred archers, charged the French furiously, took and broke to pieces the engines of the siege, drove back the besiegers, and, following up their advantage, fell on the camp and set fire to it, killing many of the enemy. The countess was so overjoyed at this signal triumph, that, on the return of

Sir Walter to the city, she hastened to receive him, and, says Froissart, kissed him and his companions twice or thrice, "like a valiant lady."

The siege was raised, and the French removed the war to Lower Brittany. Don Louis of Spain went along the coast attended by a strong force of Spaniards and Genoese, and indulged his disposition for cruelty by burning Guerante, and sacking the whole country as far as Quimperlé. Sir Walter, informed of this, pursued Don Louis with all speed, taking ship with three thousand archers and a sufficient proportion of men-at-arms. He came up with him at Quimperlé, seized his fleet and all his booty in the harbour, fell upon Don Louis's force, killed his brother Don Alphonso, severely wounded Don Louis himself, who hurriedly escaped in a skiff, and totally destroyed or dispersed his followers.

Brilliant as these actions were, the forces sent to support the countess were far too inadequate to this object. Don Louis, smarting under his defeat, had again joined Charles of Blois, who had in the interim taken the important towns of Vannes and Karhuis, and together they returned to invest Hennebon, against which they reared sixteen engines of the largest size, with which they dreadfully battered and shook the walls. The undaunted countess, however, defended the ramparts with woolsacks, and jeered the assailants by asking them why they did not bring up their army from Quimperlé. Don Louis, against whom this was aimed, burned for revenge, and endeavoured to obtain it in a most dastardly and unknightly manner. Amongst the prisoners of Charles of Blois were two gallant Englishmen, Sir John Butler and Sir Matthew Trelawney. These brave men, out of spite to the English, who had so signally defeated him, Don Louis demanded to be delivered up to him, that he might put them to death in the sight of the whole army and city. Charles, who revolted at so dishonourable a proposal, refused; but on Don Louis declaring that he would renounce the cause of Charles for ever, they were given up. Don Louis had them bound ready, and declared that after dinner he would strike off their heads under the city walls. No persuasions of his knights could divert him from his savage purpose. But, Sir Walter Manny hearing of it, made a sally, in which Sir Aimery of Clisson, a Breton knight, attacking the French in front, and Sir Walter, issuing from a private postern, and falling on the camp, found the two condemned knights and rescued them. The French were soon after compelled to raise the siege, and concluded a truce with the countess till the following May, 1343.

This interval the countess of Montfort employed in a voyage to England, soliciting fresh forces, which were despatched in forty-six vessels, under Robert of Artois. The countess sailed with them; and off Guernsey they encountered a French fleet of thirty-two ships, much larger and better than the English ones, commanded by the redoutable Don Louis of Spain, and manned by a thousand men-at-arms and three thousand Genoese crossbowmen. The engagement was very fierce, the countess in full armour taking the deck and fighting sword in hand. The battle was interrupted by night, accompanied by a terrible tempest. The English fleet, however, escaped safely into Hennebon. Soon after landing they took Vannes by surprise, and then they divided their forces; Sir Walter Manny and the countess defending Hennebon, and the earls of Salisbury and Pembroke attacked Rennes, leaving Robert of Artois in Vannes. Here he was suddenly surrounded by twelve thousand French troops under Olivier de Clisson and De Beaumanoir, who took the city by storm. Robert of Artois narrowly escaped, but so severely wounded, that he took shipping for England, where he soon died. So perished a man who more than any other had caused this bloody war. Edward III. was so affected by his loss, for he was greatly attached to him, that he vowed to avenge his death; and accordingly he crossed the sea to Morbion near Vannes, with an army of twelve thousand men, in October of that year.

Edward marched to Rennes and Nantes, destroying the country as he went, and laying siege to Vannes, Rennes, and Nantes all at once. By dividing his forces he failed in all his attempts, for Charles of Blois had obtained an army from the king of France of forty thousand men under the duke of Normandy, his eldest son. Edward, on the approach of this formidable force, entrenched himself before Vannes, and the duke of Normandy sat down at a short distance from him and entrenched himself likewise in his camp. Here the two forces lay for some weeks, neither venturing to strike the first blow; and the pope now stepped in by his legates, and persuaded them to sign a truce for three years and eight months. Edward having secured honourable terms for himself and allies, returned home.

But the truce was by no means observed by either side. The different parties were become so exasperated against each other that they went on fighting as though there were no truce at all. Philip of France was bound by one of its conditions to liberate John de Montfort; but he still kept him in prison, notwithstanding the remonstrances of the pope, and persevered in his attacks on Brittany, which the countess defended with her accustomed spirit. Several knights of distinction were in treaty to pass over to the side of De Montfort, and Philip making the discovery, lured them to a grand tournament, and had their heads struck off in the centre of the Halles, or market-place, at Pons. Amongst these were the brave knight Olivier de Clisson, already mentioned. John de Montaubon, and many others there and in Normandy, were as ruthlessly dealt with. This perfidious and sanguinary conduct produced a feeling of horror everywhere; and such of the Breton knights as had fought for Charles of Blois went over to the countess de Montfort. Foremost amongst the malcontents thus created was Jane de Belville, the widow of the murdered Olivier de Clisson, who became a determined enemy, and who, carrying her son to the countess of Montfort to be brought up with hers, became indefatigable in her pursuit of vengeance on the French. It was a remarkable circumstance that these wars produced three women, all named Jane, the wives of Charles of Blois, of De Montfort, and of De Clisson, who displayed the most extraordinary spirit, each rivalling the other in their heroic actions.

This contempt of the truce roused the English nation to support the king in the continuance of the war. The parliament granted him liberal supplies, and he sent over his near kinsman, the earl of Derby, son of the earl of Lancaster, with an army, to protect Guienne and give assistance to the countess de Montfort. The earl of Derby was a nobleman of great ability and integrity of character, as distinguished for his humanity as his bravery. He very

soon placed Guienne in a posture of strong defence, and then made a bold advance into the enemy's country. He attacked and defeated the count de l'Isle at Bergerac, reduced a great part of Perigord, and took the strong castle of Auberoche in Gascony. This castle was again attempted by De l'Isle, being left only with a weak garrison; but a spy whom Derby had in the French camp apprised the earl of its situation. He advanced into the neighbourhood with a thousand cavalry, and found the castle invested by ten or twelve thousand men. The earl had sent to the earl of Pembroke at Bergerac to meet him with a large force, but he had not come up. To ordinary men the idea of attacking the French army of ten thousand or more with his one thousand would have appeared insane; but the earl had with him the able commanders Sir Walter Manny, lord Ferrars, Sir Richard Hastings, and others, and, taking advantage of a wood, they came suddenly on the French camp as the soldiers were cooking their suppers. Darting amongst them with loud shouts of "A Derby! a Derby!" the sudden apparition of the enemy threw the whole French host into such confusion that a total rout took place, and the count de l'Isle, with nine earls and viscounts, and nearly all the barons, knights, and squires of his army, were taken.

This terminated the campaign of lord Derby for 1345; and the next year, when he became earl of Lancaster through the death of his father, he pursued his victories, and took the strong towns and fortresses of Monsegur, Monsepat, Villefranche, Miremont, Tonnins, the castle of Damassen, Aiguilon, and Reole. His successes were favoured by the state of France at that time, where the exhausted finances led Philip to debase the coin and lay a heavy impost on salt, both of which circumstances excited great disaffection and disorder in the kingdom. At length the duke of Normandy, attended by the duke of Burgundy and other powerful nobles, led a large army to the frontiers of Guienne, and compelled Lancaster to stand on the defensive, his forces being greatly inferior in number.

While these events were taking place Edward III. was earnestly at work at home, endeavouring to organise an efficient scheme for achieving something more than the defence of Guienne, or the aid of Brittany; namely, his great dream of the conquest of total France. His first attempt was to secure the co-operation of his old friend Jacob van Artavelde, the brewer of Ghent. He had the daring to propose that his son, the Black Prince, should be offered to the people of Flanders in lieu of their old earl, who had gone over to the French interest. But this scheme cost the stout old Artavelde his life. No sooner was the overture made than the burgesses took alarm at it, and lost their faith in Van Artavelde as a patriot. Bruges and Ypres were brought over by the promised advantages of trade with England, but his own town of Ghent broke out into open insurrection. When he rode into the city attended by a body of Welsh, whom Edward had sent, he was received with the most hostile looks and expressions. He hastened to his house, and endeavoured by a speech from an upper window to appease the incensed people; but it was in vain. They broke into his house and murdered him on the spot. The man who had reigned like a king, from the opinion of his patriotism, now fell by the hand of a saddler, and amid the execrations of the mob, as a traitor. Hope of assistance was gone for Edward in that quarter.

He was equally unfortunate in Hainault. His brother-in-law, the young count of Hainault, was killed also in a revolt of the Frieslanders; and his uncle, the well-known John of Hainault, so long allied with England, went over to the French on the plea that Edward had not duly estimated or rewarded his services. About the same time, too, John de Montfort, so long a captive in Paris, was liberated, but died of a fever before Quimperlé. All hope appeared closed on the side of the Netherlands and of Brittany; but a new light sprung up in an unexpected quarter, giving an entirely new turn to his enterprise.

Sir Godfrey de Harcourt, lord of Saint Sauveur le Vicompte, and brother of John, earl of Harcourt, long in the service of England, had stood high in the favour of Philip of France; but having offended him by resisting one of his arbitrary acts, he had a narrow escape of sharing the fate of Olivier de Clisson; he fled to England, and, like his predecessor, Robert of Artois, he exerted all his talent to persuade the king to invade France on the side of Normandy, Sir Godfrey's own country, and where, of course, lay his forfeited estates. He represented to Edward that it was one of the most fertile and beautiful provinces of France—abounded with wealth, for it had not been the scene of war for two centuries; that the numerous and opulent towns had scarcely any fortifications, and were now deserted by the nobility and their vassals, who were with the duke of Normandy in Gascony. He reminded Edward that it was an ancient possession of England, lay near the English coast, might be secured almost without a blow, and would strike the French king dumb with consternation, for it would bring his capital within easy reach of attack.

It is surprising that these facts had not presented themselves to Edward before; but, once offered to his mind, he embraced them with avidity. He assembled a fine army of thirty thousand men, consisting of four thousand men-at-arms, ten thousand archers, ten thousand Welsh infantry, and six thousand Irish. Circumstances, rather than his own wishes, had brought him to depend no longer on mercenary and treacherous allies, but upon his own subjects; and from this moment he began to perform those prodigies of arms which raised the name of Englishman above all others for steady and transcendent valour. He set sail from Southampton in a fleet of near a thousand sail of all dimensions, carrying with him all the principal nobility of the realm, and his son, the Black Prince, now fifteen years of age. He landed his army at La Hogue, on the coast of Normandy, and there divided it into three bodies, one of which he placed under the command of the earl of Warwick, another under Sir Godfrey de Harcourt, whom he created marshal, and the third under the earl of Arundel, whom he made constable; he himself was generalissimo, and before setting out on his march he knighted the prince of Wales and a number of the young nobility. He next caused the French ships in La Hogue, Barfleur, and Cherbourg to be destroyed. This work was committed to the English fleet, and the plunder of these seaports was given up to those who manned it. Advancing into the country, Edward found it almost wholly defenceless, as Harcourt had represented. Montebourg, Carentan, St. Lo, Valognes, and other places in the Cotentin were taken and pillaged.

One of the king's objects was to create an alarm and

thus draw off the French forces from Guienne; and in this he succeeded. The king of France, startled by this unexpected invasion, hastened to assemble troops from all quarters. He was soon at the head of a numerous army, which, from the sounding titles of many of the allies and generals, appeared extremely formidable. Amongst them were the kings of Bohemia and Majorca, the emperor elect of Germany, the duke of Lorraine, John of Hainault, and

Edward the Black Prince.

the earl of Flanders. He despatched the count of Eu, constable of France, and the count of Tankerville to defend the populous and commercial city of Caen; but they were speedily overthrown by Edward, who took the two counts prisoners, and, entering the city, massacred the inhabitants without distinction of age, sex, or rank. The scenes perpetrated in Caen are frightful to record, and present a revolting picture of the savage spirit of the age in war. It never seems to have entered the heads of these feudal conquerors that the wealth of the inhabitants, in case of success, would become national wealth, or that to massacre and ill-treat those inhabitants was the certain way to render them for ever hostile. Plunder and destruction were the only ideas of Edward's soldiers. The wretched people of Caen, driven to desperation, barricaded their doors against the ruffianly invaders. They, in turn, set fire to the houses, till Edward, at the earnest entreaty of Sir Godfrey Harcourt, put a stop to the burning, but gave up the town to three days' pillage, reserving for his own share the jewels, plate, silks, fine cloths, and linen. These he shipped for England, with three hundred of the richest citizens, for whom he meant to demand heavy ransoms. Two cardinal legates, who had come with the benevolent hope of negotiating a peace, beheld instead this fearful butchery. The church at this period was the only power which endeavoured to bring to men's remembrance the benign influence of Christianity, and, in exerting itself to check the spirit of military carnage and devastation,

COMBAT BETWEEN THE FRENCH AND ENGLISH CAVALRY AT THE PASSAGE OF THE SOMME. (See page 380.)

certainly discharged its sublime duty well. As for these martial monarchs, they seemed to forget in the fury of war all compassion; and both Edward and his youthful son displayed a hard and sanguinary disposition in their campaigns, in melancholy contrast with the high professions of chivalrous courtesy. Edward, on this occasion, as afterwards at Calais, was wrought to a pitch of vindictiveness greatly derogatory to the character of a hero: in that temper he forgot all magnanimity.

Edward, having inflicted this terrible chastisement on Caen, then advanced towards Rouen, intending to treat it the same; but, on arriving opposite to that city, he found the bridge of boats was taken away, and Philip of Valois occupying the right bank of the Seine, with an army far superior to his own. Edward then continued his march up the left bank of the river towards Paris, destroying all the towns and the country as he went along. The French king marched along the right bank, breaking down all the bridges, and taking every means to prevent his crossing. After sacking Vernon and Mantes, the English king arrived at Poissy, within nine miles of Paris. Here finding the bridge only partially destroyed, he resorted to this stratagem in order to get across it:—He still ascended the river, as if intending to march on Paris; and his advanced lines actually scoured the country up to its very gates, burnt St. Germains, St. Cloud, Bourg-la-Reine, Nanterre, and Neuilly. Having thus drawn the French king to Paris, he suddenly made a reverse march, reached Poissy, hastily repaired the bridge, and passed his troops over. Once across the Seine, he proceeded by hasty marches towards the river Somme. His vanguard, commanded by Harcourt, met with reinforcements proceeding from Amiens to the king's camp, and defeated them with great slaughter. Reaching Beauvais, he burnt its suburbs, and plundered Pois. As he drew near the Somme he found himself in the same difficulties as at the Seine. All the bridges were destroyed, and he endeavoured, but unsuccessfully, to pass at Pont St. Remi, Long, and Pequiny. He was now fast being enclosed by the enemy. The Somme was a deep, and, so far as they could find, impassable river; on its right bank showed a strong force under Godemar de Faye, a powerful baron of Normandy, supported by the gentlemen of Artois and Picardy. Approaching the sea, near Oisement, he was thus cooped up between it and the Somme, with Philip and an army of a hundred thousand men pressing on his rear. In this urgent extremity the marshals of the army were sent out to see whether they could not possibly discover a ford, but in vain. Edward now appeared in a very serious dilemma; but, assembling all the prisoners belonging to that part of the country, he offered to any one who would point out a ford his own liberty and that of thirty of his companions. On this a peasant, named Gobin Agace, said, "Know, sir, that during the ebb-tide the Somme is so low at a place which I can show you, that it may be passed either by horse or foot with ease. The bottom is plain to see, for it is of chalk, quite white, and so is called Blanchetaque, that is, white water."

On hearing this agreeable news Edward ordered the trumpets to sound at midnight, and set out from Oisement for the ford. There he arrived some hours before the ebb, and was compelled to wait, seeing Godemar de Faye ready with twelve thousand men on the other side to oppose his passage, and every minute expecting the arrival of Philip. As soon as the ford was passable he ordered the marshals to dash into the river, and to drive back the enemy in the name of God and St. George! So great was his impatience that he himself led the way, crying, "Let those who love me follow me." The French forces met them half way, and valiantly disputed the passage; but they were driven back. The English, however, found the main body, strongly posted on the right bank at a narrow pass through which they were compelled to force their way by hard fighting. The Genoese crossbowmen here galled them severely with their arrows; but the English archers replied so vigorously, that they drove the enemy from the ground, and landed in safety. It was still but just in time, for Philip came galloping up before the rearguard had reached the other side, and did some damage amongst them. The tide, however, was now too high to permit him to follow; he therefore took his way up the river to Abbeville, and crossed at the bridge there.

Meantime Edward, having made this admirable passage, resolved to march no further. He had hoped to receive reinforcements promised him by the repentant Flemings, but they did not appear, and he considered it hazardous to attempt to cross the open plains of Picardy in the presence of so preponderating a force, especially of French cavalry. He resolved to make a stand. He selected a strong position in the forest of Cressy, or Creçy, and near a village of that name. "Here," said he, "I am on the rightful heritage of my lady-mother, upon the lands of Ponthieu, given to her as her marriage dower. I now challenge them as my own, and may God defend the right!" He took his station on a gentle ascent, having in his rear a wood, where he placed all his baggage, and defended it with an entrenchment. He also threw up entrenchments on his flanks to secure them, and divided his army into three divisions. The first he put under the command of Edward, the prince of Wales, now in his sixteenth year, to fight his first battle. Under him were the earls of Warwick and Oxford, Sir Godfrey Harcourt, the lord Holland, and Sir John Chandos; but to Sir John and to the earl of Warwick the king confided the especial care of the prince, who were to assist him by their counsel, and defend him in difficulty. The second line was commanded by the lords Willoughby, De Roos, Bassett, and others. The king himself took the charge of the third, to hold it in readiness to support either of the other two, or secure their retreat, as circumstances might decide. The amount of the English army has been variously stated at from ten to thirty thousand; but the most authentic accounts state it to be about one-fourth of the French, who were estimated at one hundred and twenty thousand. The king of England, having made his arrangements, ordered the troops to take up their ground on the spot where they were to fight, and to await the next morning with confidence of victory. The soldiers set about vigorously polishing their arms, and repairing and burnishing their armour. They were well fed, and refreshed by abundant wine and provisions which had been seized in the port of Crotoy. The king gave a supper to his barons in his tent, where he made good cheer. When it was concluded he entered into the tent set apart as an oratory, and, falling on his knees, prayed God to bring him "out of the morrow with honour."

The night was warm; and the soldiers, having well supped, slept on the grass in their arms. With the early

dawn the king and prince were up and amongst their forces.

Edward, mounted on a white palfrey, and attended on each hand by a marshal, rode through the ranks, spoke to the different officers, and exhorted the men to remember that they had to-day to fight against superior numbers, and must therefore do their best for the honour of their country. He reminded them of the decided advantage which they had hitherto shown over the enemy; and he had such an air of confidence and cheerfulness, that every one augured nothing but victory. Thus they sat, each in his place, with his helm and bow before him, and so awaited the foe. When they had thus continued till three in the afternoon, and no enemy was yet come up, the king ordered that every man should eat and take a little wine, which they did in great satisfaction.

Meantime the king of France, having passed the night at Abbeville, set out, reinforced by a thousand lancers under Amadius, earl of Savoy. He deemed that he had nothing to do but to overtake the English army in order to annihilate it. For weeks it appeared to have been flying before him, and by hastily crossing the Seine and the Somme it had borne every appearance of wishing, at all costs, to avoid a conflict. He therefore pushed on hastily and in great confusion. By the time that his advanced guard came in sight of the English lines his forces were tired and his rearguard far behind. A veteran Bohemian officer, being sent forward to reconnoitre the English army, rode back to Philip and strongly recommended him to put off the battle till the next day. He assured him that the English were fresh and strongly posted, and would undoubtedly make a desperate defence. The French, depressed and exhausted by the haste of their march from Abbeville, must fight at vast disadvantage.

The king commanded a halt; but the ill-disciplined troops still pressed on, the van brandishing their swords, and crying, in their over-confidence, "Attack, take, slay!" and those behind, hurrying forward, declaring they would not stop till they were as forward as the foremost. So they rushed on pell-mell. Froissart says, no one, except he had been present, could form any idea of the confusion of the scene. Philip had divided his army into three divisions; the first commanded by the king of Bohemia, supported by his son Charles of Luxembourg, emperor-elect of Germany, and Charles, count of Alençon, the brother of king Philip, a brave but haughty and rash youth. In this division were fifteen thousand Genoese crossbowmen, headed by Anthony Doria and Carolo Grimaldi. These bowmen were looked upon as the great strength of the army; an overmatch for the English archers, whom they were quickly to drive from the field. They were backed by twenty thousand infantry. The second division was led by Philip himself, consisting of six thousand men-at-arms and forty thousand foot. The broad banner of France was displayed before the king, and at his side rode the titular king of Majorca. The rear division followed, conducted by the earl of Savoy, with five thousand lances and twenty thousand foot. The last was most formidable in numbers; but all superiority was lost in the disorder of the march. The kings and dukes and great lords were hurried along without power to exert any command, and Philip himself, in striving to enforce a halt, was borne onward as by a torrent. Finding himself face to face with the enemy, he cried, "Bring up the Genoese; begin the battle, in the name of God and St. Denis!"

But these Italians, who were brave and famous men, very reasonably complained of thus being hurried into battle, worn-out as they were with carrying their heavy crossbows in the hasty march of six leagues, and said they had more need of rest than to fight that day. On hearing this the count Alençon cried out, "See! that is the help we get by employing these fellows, who thus fail us at the pinch." The sensitive Italians heard these words with deep anger, and moved on to battle. At this moment the heavens seemed to announce that a great and terrible conflict was about to take place. A thunder-storm, making it almost as dark as night, burst over the opposed hosts, and before it went a great flight of crows and ravens, sweeping over the armies. When the sun broke out again it flashed in the faces of the Genoese, and the strings of their crossbows had become relaxed with the wet. On the other hand, the sun was on the backs of the English, and they had kept their longbows dry in their cases. They were drawn up by the king in ranks crossed in the manner of a *herse*, or harrow, so that the discharges of the different ranks might support each other, like the discharges of combined squares of musketry in these times. No sooner, therefore, did the Genoese crossbowmen, after giving three leaps and three loud shouts to intimidate the English, let fly a shower of arrows, than the English archers stepped each of them one pace forward, and shot their arrows so thick that, as the chronicler describes it, it seemed to snow. The Genoese, confounded by the perpetual hail of the English arrows, which pierced their armour, fell back on the men-at-arms. The confusion then became fearful. The Genoese cut their bowstrings or threw away their bows, and endeavoured to make their escape amongst the horses of the cavalry. The king of France, seeing this, cried out, "Slay me these cowards, for they stop our way, without doing any good!" The men-at-arms advanced at full gallop right over the wretched Genoese, cutting them down right and left, and numbers were trodden under foot; while the cavalry itself was thrown into disorder by thus riding over their own bowmen to come at the enemy.

All this time the English archers kept pouring in their deadly shafts, dropping the knights and soldiers of Alençon's fine cavalry rapidly from their saddles; while the Cornish men and Welsh, armed with large knives, stole amongst the ranks and despatched those knights as they lay.

Edward had given strict orders to take no prisoners, because the enemy was so much more numerous, that it would encumber his fighting men, and keep them from the battle in looking after their captives.

Spite of the confusion, the count of Alençon and the earl of Flanders broke at length through it, and, charging past the line of English archers, took the cavalry of the prince of Wales in flank. Both sides now fought desperately; but the English men-at-arms handled the French cavalry so roughly, that the greater part of them were slain. Notwithstanding, three other squadrons of French and Germans rushing forward impetuously, broke through the archers, and pushed their way into the very place where the young prince was performing prodigies of valour. The second division, under the earls of Arundel and Northampton, advanced to support the prince, and

the contest became furious. Alençon displayed the most fiery courage, and, amid a crowd of French, Germans, Savoyards, and Bohemians, pressed upon the prince with a vigour which threatened to carry all before it. The French king, eager to support Alençon, charged nobly on the archers, but could not penetrate their line, or the event might have been doubtful. The earl of Warwick, alarmed by the dangerous position of the prince, despatched Sir Thomas Norwich to Edward, entreating him to send aid to his son.

Edward, who was watching the progress of the battle from a windmill on the hill top, demanded of the messenger whether the prince were dead, wounded, or felled to the ground. "Not so, thank God," answered the messenger; "but he needs assistance." "Nay, then," said the king, "he has no aid from me. Tell him from me that I know that he will bear him like a man, and show himself worthy of the knighthood I have so lately conferred on him. In this battle he must win his own spurs."

This being reported to the prince, gave new courage and strength to both him and his attendants. The force thrown in by Arundel and Northampton bore down the enemy, and slew the gallant count Alençon and dispersed his battalions; the Welsh with their long knives destroying all left alive on the ground.

The king of France, still struggling to come up to the rescue of his brother, only arrived to find him killed and his forces scattered. The flying cavalry communicated their panic to the king's own followers; but the king himself scorned to fly, and fought most bravely. His horse was killed under him; he mounted another, and still fought on till only about sixty of his bravest attendants remained around him. Repeatedly wounded, he would probably have lost his life; but John of Hainault, having in vain urged him to quit the field, forcibly seized the bridle of his horse and led him away. The whole French army was in flight, the English pursuing and putting all to the sword without mercy whom they could reach.

The king of France rode away till he came to the castle of Broye, where, summoning the warder to open the gates, that officer demanded who was there, for it was dark night. "It is the fortune of France," said the king, probably in bitter recollection of the flatteries which had styled him "the Fortunate." On entering, the king had only five of his barons with him. They refreshed themselves with wine, and then continued their flight, by the assistance of guides, to Amiens.

Such was the memorable battle of Creçy, one of the greatest and most surprising victories which ever was gained by any king. It was fought on Saturday, the 26th of August, 1346. On that fatal field lay slain two kings, eleven great princes, eighty bannerets, one thousand two hundred knights, and thirty thousand men. It began after three o'clock in the afternoon, and continued till the darkness ended it.

Amongst the great men killed, besides the count Alençon, the king's brother, were the dukes of Lorraine and Bourbon, the counts of Blois, Vaudemont, Aumale, and Philip's old ally the earl of Flanders. Of the two slain kings of Minorca and Bohemia, the death of John of Bohemia was very remarkable. He was old, and nearly blind. When all seemed lost, inquiring after his son, and hearing that he was wounded and compelled to fly, and that the Black Prince showed himself irresistible, he said, "Sirs, ye are my knights and good liegemen; will ye conduct me so far into the battle that I may strike one good stroke with my sword?"

His faithful knights regarding these as the words of sad despair, four of them agreed to sacrifice their lives with him, and, tying his bridle rein on each side to their own, they thus charged into the thickest of the fight, and were found the next day lying dead together, the reins of their horses still unsevered.

The rejoicing on the part of the English may be imagined. The soldiers lit up great fires and torches to disperse the darkness, and by that light king Edward descended from his eminence, and, taking his valiant son in his arms before the whole army, he kissed him; and, according to Froissart, said, "Sweet son, God gave you good perseverance. You are my true son, for valiantly have you acquitted yourself to-day, and shown yourself worthy of a crown." On which the prince bowed lowly, and declared that the honour of the victory was owing to the king.

The next day it proved foggy, and the king sending out a detachment of five hundred lances and two thousand archers to scour the fields and discover whether any bodies of French were yet keeping their ground, they met with two numerous detachments hastening to the assistance of the king of France, one of them headed by the bishop of Rouen and the grand prior of France. They were coming from Beauvais and Rouen, and made a vigorous resistance; but were all cut to pieces, in accordance with the barbarous policy of Edward on that occasion. Some historians have asserted that the English raised a number of French standards, which they took, on an eminence; which thus attracting stragglers of the French army, they were butchered as they arrived. These are blots on the glory of that great victory which it is painful to record.

The king sent out the lords Cobham and Suffolk, with attendant heralds, to recognise the arms, and secretaries to write down the names of the fallen, and they returned an account of the numbers we have given; but of the English only three knights, one esquire, and a few of inferior rank.

The king on Sunday having attended mass, and returned solemn thanks to Heaven for this great victory, on the Monday morning ordered the bodies of the kings and great nobles and knights to be borne to the monastery of Montennay for burial, and proclaimed three days' truce that the people of the country might come in and bury their dead. Having discharged this duty, he marched north, taking the way by the coast, through Montreuil-sur-mer, towards Calais, which he had resolved to take possession of, as a secure and necessary entrance into the kingdom of France for the prosecution of his great design on it.

CHAPTER LXV.

Edward III. continued—Siege of Calais—Battle of Neville's Cross—Capture of the Scottish King—Attempt to retake Calais by the French—Institution of the Garter—Disturbances in France excited by the King of Navarre—Battle of Poictiers—The King of France taken Prisoner and brought to England—Fresh Invasion of France—The Peace of Bretigni—Return of King John to France—Disorders of that Kingdom—The Free Companions—Expedition of the Black Prince into Castile—Fresh Campaign in France—Decline of the English Power there—Death of the Black Prince—Death of Edward III.—Character of his Reign and State of the Kingdom.

WITHIN six days of the victory of Creçy, Edward had sat down before the city of Calais. He had now fully adopted Sir Godfrey de Harcourt's plan of conquering France

through Normandy; and the only remarkable thing is, that, having once entertained the idea of that conquest, he should have overlooked for a moment its unparalleled advantages. Guienne was distant, and only to be reached by a voyage which, at that time, must often be formidable, across the stormy Bay of Biscay. Even in sending succours to the much nearer parts of Britanny, we have just seen that they were detained by contrary winds forty days. Once there he was surrounded in a great measure by hostile provinces; while, on the other hand, Calais lay within twenty-four miles of his own coast, which gave him most easy access to Normandy, Picardy, and Artois. Seeking the alliance of the Flemings, this province lay within a short distance of their own, and no doubt he would have found that people much more disposed for an invasion of a rich and proximate country, than the remoter one of Guienne. Rouen, the capital of the province, could be approached direct by the Seine, and placed the king on the very highway to Paris, and only eighty miles distant from it.

These facts were now fully perceived by Edward, and he invested Calais with his victorious army, determined to make himself master of it. He calculated on the effect which his destructive overthrow of the French must produce on the inhabitants, and on the certainty that Philip was for a long time rendered impotent of much annoyance. In fact, to secure his capital and northern provinces, Philip was compelled to recall his son, the duke of Normandy, with his army. No sooner did he retreat than the earl of Lancaster, formerly earl of Derby, who had been much pressed by the French, and only enabled to hold his ground by assistance which Sir Walter Manny brought up from Britanny, leaving Bordeaux, crossed the Garonne and the Dordogne, took Mirabeau, Lusignan, Tallebourg, St. Jean d'Angeli, and laid waste the country as far as Poictiers, which he also took by storm and plundered. He thence extended his incursions to the Loire, and ranged through the southern provinces of the kingdom, carrying terror and devastation everywhere. His soldiers were so laden with spoil that they came to despise the richest merchandise, and cared only for gold, silver, and jewels, which they could readily transport, and for the feathers which were then worn by the soldiers in their helmets. With this treasure they returned loaded to Bordeaux.

All this time the war was raging in Britanny, where the countess de Montfort was creating a powerful diversion in favour of her ally the king of England, and against her enemy the king of France. Uniting her forces with those of the English under Sir Thomas Dagworth, they raised the siege of Roch d'Arien, which her rival, Charles of Blois, was investing with fifteen thousand men, and took Charles of Blois prisoner. The countess sent him to London for safe keeping, where he was confined for nine years in the Tower, as her husband had been in the Louvre. On the captivity of Charles, his countess, Jane the lame, took on herself the conduct of affairs, and for some time maintained valiantly the cause of her house; though neither she nor her husband, on his restoration to liberty, could ever overcome the brave-hearted countess of Montfort, who transmitted her province to her descendants.

In this, truly called the age of great women, another of still higher rank, the queen Philippa of England, was at the same time showing herself equally courageous, and capable of transacting public affairs. Philip of France, alarmed at the vast success and the military genius of Edward III., exerted his influence with David, king of the Scots, to make a diversion on his behalf by invading England during Edward's absence. David Bruce had passed many years with his young queen in France, and was, therefore, under great obligations to the king. He was recalled by the Scots to his throne in 1342, and had kept up a friendly correspondence with his old host. Though David was a brave young prince, he did not possess the sagacity, or his years did not give him the experience, of his father. He was equally impelled by his resentment to his brother-in-law, the king of England, who had driven him from his throne, and by the instigations of the French king, to make occasional raids into England. In the four years since he had been reinstated, he had made no less than three successful expeditions of this kind, and now that his old benefactor was so sorely bested, he prepared for a still more decisive invasion. He placed himself at the head of three thousand cavalry and thirty thousand other troops, mounted on galloways. Marching from Perth, he reached the borders, numbering, it is said, then fifty thousand men. He took the castle of Liddel, burnt Lanercost, sacked the priory of Hexham, advanced into the bishopric of Durham, and encamped at Beaurepaire, or Bearpark, near the city of Durham. David calculated on an easy triumph over the English, nearly the whole of the nobility being absent at the siege of Calais. But Philippa, Edward's queen, assembled a body of twelve thousand men, and, advancing rapidly northward, came up with the Scots as they were laying waste the country round Durham, and pitched her camp in Auckland Park. She gave the command of her army to lord Percy, but, according to Froissart, she herself mounted her horse and rode through the ranks, exhorting the men to remember that their king was absent, that the honour and safety of England were in their hands, and appealing to them to defend the realm and punish the Scots for their barbarous ravages. She could not, according to this author, be persuaded to quit the field for a place of safety till the armies were on the point of engaging. It has been doubted how far this proceeding of the queen is strictly true, not being mentioned by the old English chroniclers; but, besides the testimony of Froissart, it is unquestionable that Philippa's bold and able management did much to insure the victory which followed.

The Scots, who appear to have been thrown off their guard by over-confidence, and who were thinking more of plunder than of the enemy, were taken by surprise. Douglas, the famous knight of Liddesdale, was intercepted at Sunderland Bridge on his return from a raid as far as Ferry-on-the-Hill, and narrowly escaped being taken, five hundred of his followers being cut to pieces. David, also taken by surprise, still mustered his troops, and took his stand at Neville's Cross, near the city of Durham. The English archers, securing themselves under the hedges, shot down the horses of the Scots, threw them, crowded as they were together, into confusion, and laid their riders prostrate in the dust. David fought undauntedly; but Edward Baliol, who commanded the reserve, made a skilful attack of cavalry on his flank, and his troops giving way on all sides, he was forcibly taken prisoner by one John Cope-

land, a Northumberland squire, a man of huge stature and strength, but not before he had received two arrow wounds, and, refusing to listen to calls to surrender, had knocked out two of the front teeth of his captor by a blow of his gauntlet. Copeland conveyed his royal prize to his castle of Ogle, and was careful not to give him up except to properly authorised royal commissioners, when he received the title of banneret and an estate of £500 a year, equal to as many thousands now, and was made sheriff of Northumberland and governor of Berwick.

The joy of the people of Durham was unbounded, for their nobles and dignitaries of the church fought in the foremost ranks, having the deepest hereditary hatred to the Scots from their numerous spoilings by them. The bishop of Durham led off the first division with lord Percy; the archbishop of York led the second with lord Neville; and the bishop of Lincoln the third with lord Mowbray. The prior of Durham, it was said, had been commanded the night before in a dream by St. Cuthbert "to raise the *corporax cloth* with which St. Cuthbert, during mass, did cover the chalice," as a banner on a spear point; and accordingly he and a body of monks, at a spot called the Red Hills, in sight of both armies, knelt round it in prayer, while another body of the brethren on the top of the great campanile, or bell tower of the cathedral, sung hymns of praise, which, says Knyghton, were distinctly heard by both armies. A third body of the clergy were engaged in the very hottest of the battle.

The third division of the Scots, under the earl of Moray, was actually cut to pieces on the field, only eighty of them being left at the time of the king's surrender. With the king were taken the earls of Sutherland, Monteith, Fife, Carrick, Moray, and Strathern; Sir William Douglas, John and Alan Stuart, and a long list of nobles and knights. Monteith was beheaded as a traitor, having accepted office under Edward.

Never did the Scots receive a more fatal overthrow; some historians say they had fifteen, others twenty thousand slain, amongst whom were the earl marshal Keith and Sir Thomas Charteris. Of the English leaders only Lord Hastings fell. King David was conveyed to London and lodged in the Tower. This memorable battle of Neville's Cross took place on the 17th of October, 1346.

Having secured her royal prisoner, queen Philippa went over to Calais, where she was received with all the triumph and honour which her meritorious conduct deserved. She found Edward in the midst of the siege, which continued obstinate. John of Vienne, the governor, supported by a strong garrison, and well provisioned, maintained a spirited defence. The place lying in a flat, swampy situation, was trying to the health of the English army, and was immensely strong, with its ditches, ramparts, and impassable morasses. The king, therefore, quite aware that it was not to be taken in a hurry, fixed his camp in the most eligible spot he could find; drew intrenchments round the city, built huts for his soldiers, which he thatched with straw or broom, and prepared by various means to render their winter campaign tolerable. His huts presented the appearance of a second town, called by the French chroniclers the Ville du Bois, or town of wood, and the harbour was blockaded to prevent the entrance of relief of any kind.

John of Vienne, perceiving the king's intention to starve them out, collected all the inhabitants of both sexes who were not necessary to the defence, and sent seventeen hundred of them out of the city. Edward not only allowed the poor creatures to pass, but gave them a good refreshment, and each a small piece of money. But as the siege continued, and John of Vienne again put out five hundred more of what he considered useless mouths, Edward lost his patience, and is said to have refused them a passage; and the governor of Calais, refusing them re-entrance to the city, they are reported to have perished of starvation between the town walls and the English lines. Such are, or were, a few of the tender mercies of war!

As the siege grew desperate violent efforts were made to relieve the city. The king of France sent ships to force a passage, but in vain. The English fleet had gradually grown to upwards of seven hundred sail, carrying more than fourteen thousand men, and of these eighty of the largest ships, under the Earl of Warwick, constantly swept the channel. The king of France was meantime making the most strenuous exertions to raise a force sufficient to expel the invader. He succeeded in winning over the young earl of Flanders as he had done his father. This young nobleman appears to have been capable of playing a very mean part. The free towns proposed to him to marry Isabella of England, a princess of great beauty, and the young man pretending to fall in with their wishes, came to the English camp, and paid his addresses to the princess as if with the most serious intentions; but having carried on his dissimulation to a disgraceful length, he seized the opportunity afforded by a hawking excursion to slip away, and made off to the French camp.

Philip levied everywhere men and money, compelling the clergy as well as the laity to yield their treasure, and even their church plate; a massive cross of gold belonging to the abbey of St. Denis being carried off. He at length appeared before Calais with an army which the writers of the age assert to have amounted to two hundred thousand men. The governor of Calais had indeed sent letters to him, announcing that the inhabitants had eaten their horses, dogs, and rats, and unless relieved, must soon eat each other. These letters were intercepted; but the king of England sent them on, tauntingly asking Philip why he did not come and relieve his people. But Philip found Edward so entrenched amongst marshes and fortifications, that he could not force a passage anywhere. Two roads only were left to the town, one along the sea shore, and the other by a causeway through the marshes. But the coast-way was completely raked by the English ships and boats, crowded with archers, drawn up on the strand; and the causeway was defended by towers and drawbridges, occupied by a great force of the most daring men in the army under the command of the earl of Lancaster and Sir Walter Manny, who had come hither from their victorious demonstration in Gascony, Guienne, and Poictou.

The king of France looked on this densely armed position with despair, and after vainly challenging king Edward to come out and fight in the open field, he withdrew. The starving people of Calais, who, on seeing the approach of the vast royal host had hung out their banners on the walls, lighted great bonfires, and sounded all their instruments of martial music for joy, now changed their joyous acclamations into shrieks and groans of despair. They lowered all their banners but the great banner of France, which floated on the loftiest tower of the city, in their dejection, and the

next day they pulled that down in desperation, and displayed the banner of England in its place in token of surrender.

Queen Philippa interceding for the Burgesses of Calais. (See page 386.)

To Sir Walter Manny, who was sent to speak with John of Vienne over the wall, that brave commander declared that they were literally perishing with hunger, and asked the lives and liberties of the citizens as the sole condition of surrender. Sir Walter told the governor that he knew well his royal master's mind and that he could not promise them the acceptance of that proposal, the king being incensed at their obstinate resistance, and determined to punish them for it. It was in vain that the governor represented that if

was this very conduct that a gallant prince like Edward ought to honour: that it was what he would have expected from an English knight. Sir Walter Manny acknowledged the justice of the sentiment and returned to soften the king's resolution, but he could only obtain this mitigation, that six of the principal citizens should be sacrificed to his resentment instead of the whole people; and they were required to come to the camp in their shirts, bare-headed and bare-footed, carrying the keys of the city and castle in their hands, and with halters about their necks.

When this ultimatum was made known to the people of Calais, they were struck with horror. John of Vienne, despairing of fulfilling the demand of the stern English king, caused the church bells to be rung, and collecting the people in the market-place, laid the matter before them. There was much weeping and lamenting, but all shrunk from the dreadful sacrifice. At length, Eustace de St. Pierre, one of the most eminent men of the place, arose and said, "Gentlemen, great and small, he who shall save the people of this fair town at the price of his own blood, shall doubtless deserve well of God and man. I will be one who will offer my head to the king of England as a ransom for the town of Calais." At this noble resolve the greater part of the assembly was moved to tears, and very soon other great burgesses, Jehan d'Aire, Jacque Wisant, and Peter Wisant, his brother, and two others, offered themselves.

They presently took off their ordinary dress, reduced themselves to the condition dictated by the conqueror, and thus they were conducted by the brave John of Vienne, very sorrowfully, and mounted on a small palfrey, for he was too weak to walk from wounds and fasting. Thus they came, followed by the sad people, men, women, and children, to the gates. The six voluntary victims were admitted into the English camp and thus conducted before Edward, when they knelt before him, and presenting him the keys implored his mercy. But Edward looking on them with great displeasure, ordered them to instant execution. Then the noble barons and knights entreated that he would not refuse to listen to their petitions for their pardon, in which the prince of Wales joined. Nothing, however, seemed to move the grim monarch. The brave Sir Walter Manny ventured to remind him of the greatness of his name, and of the stain this action would be upon it. At this the king made a stern grimace and ordered the headsman to be summoned. Then the queen, falling on her knees, said, "Ah, gentle sire! since I have crossed the seas in great danger I have asked you nothing; but now I implore you, for the sake of the Son of the Holy Mary, and for your love of me, you will have mercy on these six men."

The queen had every right to ask such a boon. She had come to announce to the king that she had been able to defend his kingdom in his absence from the Scots, to win a great victory at Neville's Cross, and to take the king of Scots captive. She was moreover far advanced in pregnancy, and yet had run every hazard to bring him such great tidings. The king must have been been more insensible than a stone to refuse her.

"Ah! dame," he said, "I could well wish that you had been elsewhere this day; but how can I deny you anything? Take these men and dispose of them as you will."

The delighted queen thanked the king heartily, had befitting attire brought for these worthy citizens, gave them in her tent a good repast, and presenting them each with six nobles, sent them away, giving orders that they should be guarded safely through the host to the town gates.

This scene, which is related on the testimony of Froissart, who dedicated his history to the queen herself, has been questioned by some historians as doubtful, particularly as Avesbury, who is minute in his relation of the surrender of Calais, is silent about it; and as it seems too derogatory to the magnanimity of Edward III., after suffering so many of the inhabitants to pass out of the city, and even relieving their wants. But we must remember what was the king's conduct at Caen, and also what is asserted of his immovable disregard to the perishing cries of the second crowd sent out of the city; and that Froissart was a cotemporary. Under all these circumstances, the transaction appears highly probable, and mankind will not readily give up a passage of human life so full of noble sacrifice and sympathy, and which has held its place firmly in history and tradition for five hundred years. The very next act of Edward's tends to confirm the narrative, for it was one of unforgiving sternness as well as policy.

The day following the surrender, August 4th, 1347, the king and queen rode into the town amid the sound of martial music, and followed by all their great lords and many men-at-arms. There they took up their quarters, and remained till the queen was delivered of a daughter, thence named Margaret of Calais. Immediately on taking possession, he ordered every inhabitant to quit the city, dispossessing them of their houses and property within the town, and substituting a thoroughly English population. The new inhabitants of the town were substantial citizens of London, and great numbers of agricultural people from the adjoining county of Kent, to whom he gave the surrounding lands. From that day to the reign of queen Mary, Calais became altogether an English colony. He made it the staple of wool, leather, lead, and tin, the four principal articles which England furnished to the Continent, and where the foreign merchants could come to procure them. Having strengthened the defences of the town, Edward concluded a truce with Philip, which was by degrees extended to six years. Neither of these monarchs, however, would have listened to terms of peace but for the constant and meritorious entreaties of the pope.

He then returned to England, but was very soon startled by a foul act of treachery on the part of the seneschal of the castle of Calais. Lord John Montgomery was left governor of the town—a brave and trustworthy man; but the governor of the castle, which commanded the place, was one Emeric, or Aimery, of Pavia, a favourite officer of the king, who had lived in his court from childhood, and had shown much bravery in the war, but who was not proof to the temptation of money. This failing, Sir Geoffrey de Charni, the commander of the French at St. Omer, who was there posted to watch the English garrison, soon discovered. He offered Sir Emeric twenty thousand crowns to put him in possession of Calais, which was accepted. This fact was at once communicated to Edward by Sir Emeric's secretary, and the king sent for the governor to London, when he showed him that he was cognisant of his plot, but offered him his life on condition that he turned his treachery against the enemy. The supple traitor readily consented, and Edward, taking with him Sir Walter Manny and the prince of Wales, with about a thousand men, secretly departed for Calais in mid-winter. Charni,

who had failed to hear of this, appeared at the appointed time to be admitted to the city. Sir Emeric opened a postern, and admitted a small detachment of the French, bearing the money. This Sir Emeric cast into a chest, saying, "We have other work to do than to count money at present."

The postern was suddenly closed; the French were cut down or overpowered by numbers, and thrust into a dungeon. Meantime Charni had advanced along the narrow causeway from the bridge at Neuilly, where he left a rear-guard, to the Boulogne gate of the city; and while expecting to be admitted they saw the gate open, and a body of men-at-arms, but most of them on foot, and attended by three hundred archers, issue forth, with the cry of "Manny to the rescue." Perceiving that they were betrayed, they cut their spears to the length of five feet, dismounted, and stood to their arms. But they were in a perilous position; for the king had despatched six banners and three hundred archers on horseback by a circuitous route to the bridge of Neuilly, where they quickly dislodged the rearguard of the French. Thus the troops on the narrow causeway were completely enclosed, and the battle became desperate. Edward fought at the head of his soldiers, without any mark of distinction upon him except his cries of "Ha! St. George! Ha! St. Edward!" accompanying every shout with a stroke of his two-handed sword. At length he encountered a knight named Eustace de Ribeaumont, who quailed all who approached him. Twice he beat the king to the ground; and it was only when Ribeaumont saw that he was left almost alone on the causeway by his countrymen, and surrounded by the English, that he surrendered his sword to the king, but without knowing who he was.

The whole of the French on the causeway were killed or made prisoners, except a few who escaped on horseback at an early period. At night, the French officers taken were invited to supper in a great hall, where the king sat at the head of the table, and the prince of Wales and nobility served during the first course. There the king let them know whom they had had the honour of contending with; and approaching Charni he told him that he was a better bargain-maker than himself, for he was near getting Calais for twenty thousand crowns, whereas it had cost him hundreds of thousands. But to Ribeaumont he gave the highest compliments; and taking from his head a chaplet of pearls, he put it on that of the knight, and bade him wear it a year and a day in his honour. He then told him he was no longer a prisoner, but at liberty without ransom.

"Nothing," says David Hume, very justly, "proves more evidently the vast superiority assumed by the nobility and gentry above all other orders of men during those ages, than the extreme difference which Edward made in his treatment of the French knights and that of the six citizens of Calais, who had exerted more signal bravery, in a cause more justifiable and more honourable."

The same historian might have added that, though on all the occasions which we have narrated, both in Scotland and France, the real business of the battle was done by the unrivalled archers of England, no particular mark of honour or note of fame was conferred on them; but for the knights and nobles new kinds of distinction were invented. Amongst these, at this precise period, originated the celebrated Order of the Garter, which still retains its value in the eyes of aspirants to royal rewards. This order was instituted to excite emulation amongst the aristocratic warriors of the time, in imitation of orders of a similar nature, both religious and military, which had been created by different monarchs of Europe. The number was, and is still, confined to twenty-five persons, besides the sovereign, except princes of the blood and illustrious foreigners, who have been admitted since the reign of George III., and hence the high value attached to this badge of distinction.

The traditionary story of its origin is, that at a state ball the king's mistress, a countess of Salisbury, dropped her garter, which the king picked up, and, observing some of the courtiers smile at the action, as if they thought he had not obtained that favour merely by accident, he exclaimed, "*Honi soit qui mal y pense!*" (Evil to him who evil thinks,) which became the motto of the order. Historians have chosen to doubt on this subject, as on many others; and antiquarians have puzzled themselves to discover some other origin: as that the garter was simply adopted as a symbol of union, and in compliment to the ladies; but still the story is a very probable one, and the tradition retains its full hold on public belief. The order was founded, according to the statutes, in 1350, and even to the time of Edward IV. ladies were admitted and wore the badge of the order. The wives of the knights companions and other great ladies had robes, the gift of the sovereign, ornamented with small garters. Our queens generally wear the garter, set with diamonds, on the left arm.

But in the midst of the gaieties, giving of honours, and festivities which succeeded the conquest of Calais and the glory of Creçy, there came one of those terrible visitations which from time to time have swept over Europe under the general name of plague or pestilence,—awful messengers of Providence to men, warning them to observe cleanly and healthy habits of life. These fatal epidemics have always appeared to originate in the same quarter—eastern Asia—and to sweep over the earth in every direction, as in radiation from that centre, carrying wholesale destruction into every place where the inhabitants were not careful to observe sanitary regulations. By medical men the disease has been regarded as a virulent species of typhus fever, which in modern times has assumed the character of cholera, which issues periodically from the same regions, and travels the earth, fixing on every spot where there is a crowded population living in dirty dwellings, ill-drained streets, swampy hollows, and amid any vapours of putridity. Like the cholera, the plague had its cold succeeded by its hot fits, attended by vomiting, diarrhœa, and great depression of the vital powers. The cholera now issues from India; the plague of Edward III.'s time was traced to China, and visited on its way India, Egypt, Greece, and most of the western nations of Europe. Stowe says that in one churchyard in London, purchased by Sir Walter Manny for the poor, fifty thousand bodies were buried. In fact, it fell, like the cholera, most severely on the poorer and worst lodged and fed people; is said to have half depopulated England; and so many of the inferior clergy perished that very many churches were left without any one to perform the service.

The mass of wealth brought from France by the victorious army did not prevent the finances of Edward from being in a very exhausted and unsatisfactory state. Those of

the king of France were worse; and these causes tended to prolong the truce. Edward several times proposed to Philip to make a permanent peace on condition that the sovereignty of Guienne, Calais, and other lands held in fief by the English in France should be acknowledged on Edward's renouncing all claim to the crown of that country. Philip steadfastly refused to listen to such terms. He died during this truce, and Edward renewed his offer to his successor, John, but with like effect.

About this time Edward and his son the Black Prince put to sea with a good fleet to chastise the Spaniards of the ports on the Bay of Biscay, who had repeatedly joined the French in intercepting and seizing his merchant vessels. The battle was fought within view of the English coast, and was watched by the queen's attendants from the hills behind Winchelsea. The engagement was contested with great valour on both sides; and in it both the king and prince had very nearly terminated their lives, for their ship was sinking, and they were only just saved by the earl of Lancaster coming to their assistance. The result was a great victory to the English, and the capture of fourteen of the Spanish vessels, though with great loss of life by the English.

Amongst the minor mortifications of Edward about this time, we may mention that his knight, Sir Emeric de Pavia, who so nearly sold Calais, but who afterwards fought bravely and took the fortress of Guisnes, was captured by his old acquaintance, Charni, whom he so bitterly deceived at the feigned surrender of Calais. Charni, therefore, took summary vengeance on him, causing his spurs to be hacked from his heels, as one unworthy of knighthood, and then having him torn to pieces by wild horses pulling in different directions.

His great friend and counsellor, Sir Godfrey de Harcourt, who had led him to seize Calais, also went back and made his humble submission to Philip before his death, throwing himself at the monarch's feet with a towel twisted round his neck like a halter, and expressing his remorse for having gone over to the English.

But circumstances were ripening destined to involve England and France again in war. John, the son of Philip, whom we have often met under the name of the duke of Normandy, commanding the armies against the English and Bretons, succeeded his father in 1350. He was then about thirty-one years of age, courageous, of great integrity of mind, possessing much experience for his age, and altogether a far more honourable prince than his father, whom his subjects hated for his avarice, and for his reckless invasion of their rights. He had, in his youth, been termed the Fortunate, but proved eventually more entitled to the cognomen of the Unlucky. John was now, by contrast, styled the Good; but John, however well-meaning, was evidently destitute of real sagacity, and his very sense of honour hurried him into the commission of deeds which early shook his popularity. The count de Brienne, count of Eu and Guisnes, and constable of France, was accused of an intention to betray his county of Guisnes, adjacent to the town of Calais, to the English monarch. John caused him to be seized at a festival at Paris immediately after his coronation, and threw him into a dungeon, whence, three days afterwards, he brought him out before the lords of his council, and, without any form of trial or permission of defence, had his head struck off. This arbitrary act excited great fears of the future proceedings of the king amongst his nobility.

But John's authority was very soon invaded and disturbed by his near kinsman, Charles, king of Navarre. This young prince was of the blood royal of France. His mother was daughter of Louis X., called Louis Hutin, and came to court and sought to render himself highly popular with both king and people. He succeeded so well, that he obtained the king's daughter, Joan, who must have been a mere girl at that time. It was soon found, however, that he was a mixture of the most shining talents and the most diabolical qualities. He was handsome, bold, eloquent, affable in his manners, and most insinuating in his address, but, at the same time, intriguing, ambitious, unprincipled, and revengeful. He had always some daring scheme on foot, and, if he failed, abandoned it without care, and plunged into another. He demanded of the king the post of constable of Normandy, vacated by the execution of De Brienne; and when the king, fearing his possession of that important command, bestowed it upon his favourite, Charles de la Cerda, the king of Navarre assassinated him in his castle of De l'Aigle, in Normandy. He then boldly avowed the deed, put himself at the head of an armed force, called around him all the hot and disaffected young nobility of France, declared himself independent of the French crown, and made offers of alliance with the English. John called upon him to lay down his arms, and resume his place as a good subject; but he refused, except on condition of an absolute pardon for the murder of the constable, large grants of money and lands, and, above all, the delivery of the second son of John as a hostage for the faithful maintenance of the contract.

The French king was weak enough to comply; and then Charles of Navarre, in March, 1355, went to court, where John sat imposingly on his throne, and Navarre went through a farce of submission. The king of England believing that it would not be long before the intrigues of the king of Navarre would produce civil discord in France, and expose it to his own plans of invasion, sent the prince of Wales, now universally called the Black Prince, from the colour of his armour, into Gascony and Aquitaine, as his lieutenant, with an army which soon grew there to sixty thousand men. Thence he soon entered the country of Toulouse and took Carcassonne, Narbonne, and several other towns, and committed great ravages.

Edward at the same time attacked France on the side of Normandy. He advanced to St. Omer, where the king of France had posted himself in expectation of this attack; but John took care not to come to open battle. The state of the internal affairs of his kingdom probably inspired John with caution, for his treacherous cousin of Navarre had resumed his seditious courses. He had united himself with the factious Sir Godfrey de Harcourt, and had succeeded in even winning over for awhile Charles, the king's eldest son, only seventeen years of age, to his party. But the young prince—the first prince royal of France who ever bore the title of dauphin, from his father having purchased that duchy for one hundred thousand florins, and conferred its feudal title on him—was soon repentant of his unfilial conduct, and betrayed Charles of Navarre, and a number of his noble associates, into his father's hands. The most guilty of the nobles were at once executed, and the king of Navarre thrown into prison. But this did not mend

matters. The brother of Charles, Philip of Navarre, assumed the management of affairs, put all his towns and castles into a state of defence, and renewed the alliance with the English. Thus situated, John avoided an engagement which might be followed by an overthrow, and leave France exposed to the united efforts of his internal and foreign enemies. He contented himself with sending a challenge to fight a battle with Edward, for which he made no disposition whatever, so that Edward treated the offer with contempt, and retired to Calais.

From Calais he was speedily recalled to England by an incursion of the Scots, the usual diversion now of the French kings. Edward appeared before Berwick in the middle of winter, January 1356, and, as usual, at his appearance the Scots withdrew. Edward, determined this time, if possible, to finish the subjugation of Scotland, made a contract at Roxburgh on the 20th of January, with Edward Baliol, by which he purchased all the rights of Baliol to the Scottish throne for five thousand marks, and an annuity of two thousand pounds. These rights were about as real as the rights of Edward to the crown of France. The Scotch had expelled Baliol in 1341, and renounced him and his claims for ever. But with this pretension Edward once more marched through the Lothians with fire and sword, burnt Edinburgh and Haddington, and then retreated for want of provisions, pursued by the Scots, who advanced from their hiding-places as he retreated, and dreadfully harassed the rear of his army. After this, Edward Baliol, freed from any pretence on the crown of Scotland, lived in retirement, and died without heirs in 1367.

Affairs in France were now approaching a crisis which well nigh proved fatal to the independence of that country. Edward III., learning that the internal disorders of France increased in consequence of the imprisonment of Charles of Navarre, sent out a small army under the earl of Lancaster to co-operate with the party of that prince in Normandy. At the same time the Black Prince, who had returned from his Toulouse expedition to Bordeaux, set out once more with an army not exceeding twelve thousand men, and few of them English except a body of archers. He now directed his marauding expedition northwards, and went on laying waste the country, and burning and plundering towns in a style which this young prince, celebrated by the historians for every virtue, appeared especially to delight in. He ravaged the Agenois and Limousin, Auvergne, Marche, and Berri. He attacked the cities of Bourges and Issodun, but without success; and it then appeared that his intention was to advance to Normandy and join his forces to those under Lancaster. But he found all the bridges on the Loire broken down, and the news which reached him of the motions of the king of France inclined him to retreat. John, exasperated at the devastations of the prince, and thinking that he had every chance of defeating him in his rash advance into the heart of the kingdom with so small a force, set out to intercept his return, with an army of upwards of sixty thousand men. The prince on his way took the town of Vierson by storm, and burnt Ramorantin, about ten leagues from Blois.

John marched for Blois, and crossing the Loire advanced for Poictiers; and the country people, naturally enraged at the prince's wanton destruction of every place he approached, kept him in ignorance of the king's approach. Edward, therefore, unconsciously advanced on Poictiers, and on the 17th of September came, all unawares, on the rear of the French army at the village of Maupertuis, only two leagues from Poictiers. His scouts came galloping in announcing that the whole country was filled by the great army. And, in fact, never did a king of France command a more promising army. Consisting of sixty thousand men, there were in it twenty thousand men-at-arms, including two thousand men-at-arms, or cavalry, sent by the Scots. Most of the princes of the blood were with him, and the greater part of the nobility. On the other hand, the prince of Wales's troops had decreased to about ten thousand, of whom the bulk were Gascons; but he had four thousand archers, and in them was the grand dependence.

The circumstances were such as to confound the bravest and most experienced commander; but the prince, though sensible of the seriousness of his situation, did not for a moment lose heart. With consummate ability he took up his position on the summit of a gentle declivity, planted with vineyards, approachable only by one narrow road flanked with hedges and thickets. This ground, so strong by nature, he employed the whole army to make stronger by trenches and embankments. Sir Eustace de Ribeaumont, the stalwart knight who had fought with his father at Calais, went out with three other knights to reconnoitre the English army, and brought this word to the king of France: — "Sir, we have seen the enemy. By our guess, they amount to two thousand men-at-arms, four thousand archers, and fifteen hundred or two thousand other men; and appear to form one division. They are strongly posted, wisely ordered, and their position is well nigh inaccessible. In order to attack them, there is but one passage, where four horsemen may ride abreast, which leads to the centre of their line. The hedges that flank this passage are lined with archers, and the English main body itself consists of dismounted men-at-arms, arranged in the form of a *herse* or harrow. By this difficult passage alone can you approach the English position; consider, therefore, what is best to be done."

King John hearing this, determined to charge the English on foot: ordering all his men-at-arms to dismount, take off their spurs, and cut their spears to the length of five feet. Three hundred horsemen only were to remain mounted, in order to break the line of archers by a violent charge, and make way for the infantry.

Edward, on his part, drew up his forces, not in one division, as when seen by de Ribeaumont, but in three, with a detachment of cavalry apart under the celebrated Captal de Buche, who was to take a compass round the hill during the fight, and fall on the rear of the French.

When about to engage, however, two legates from the pope, cardinals Talleyrand de Perigord and Capoccio, came into both the French and English camps, and used every endeavour to incline the two princes to peace. The prince of Wales was so sensible of his critical situation, that he made the most liberal offers. "Save my honour," he said, "and that of my army, and I will listen to anything." He proposed, indeed, to give up all the towns and castles which he had taken both in this and the former campaign, give up all his prisoners without ransom, and swear never again for seven years to bear arms against the king of France.

Never was a finer opportunity for securing a splendid triumph, in the surrender of so renowned an enemy; but

John the Good again showed that he was not John the Wise. He was elated with the persuasion that he had the prince wholly in his power; and the very liberality of his offer only confirmed the fatal idea. He therefore insisted on the surrender of the prince, and a hundred of his best knights, flattering himself that in holding them he held the restitution of Calais. The prince at once and indignantly rejected the proposal. The Christian efforts of the humane cardinals were abortive; the greater part of the day, which was Sunday, had been wasted in these negotiations. The prince's army was badly off for provisions for either man or horse; but they cheerfully spent the remainder of the day in strengthening their defences, and arranging their baggage behind them, as at Creçy.

Edward the Black Prince presenting King John of France to his Father, Edward III. (See page 393.)

The next morning, Monday, the 19th of September, the French army was again drawn out; and again cardinal

THE BATTLE OF POICTIERS. (See page 392).

Talleyrand endeavoured to move the mind of the French king; but he repulsed him rudely. John had arranged his army in three divisions: the first commanded by his brother, the duke of Orleans; the second by the dauphin, and two of his younger brothers; the third by the king himself, who had at his side his fourth and favourite son Philip, then about fourteen years of age. Edward, on the other hand, commanded the main body of his army, and placed the van under the command of the earl of Warwick. Just before the battle, Sir James Audley came before the prince and begged that he might begin the battle, in accordance with a vow he had made to do so in every battle of the prince's or of his father. The prince consented, and Sir James took his place with four stout esquires in the van; and thus the battle began.

The marshals of France, Andreghen and Clermont, were ordered to advance and take possession of the lane leading to the English position, and disperse the archers who lined the hedges; but as fast as they entered the lane they were shot down. Marshal Andreghen was speedily wounded and made prisoner, and Clermont was killed. The horsemen, rapidly thinned, reached the end of the lane only to encounter the main body of the Black Prince's army. There Sir James Audley led on the charge, beating down all who approached. At the same instant, the detachment of Captal de Buche, attended by six hundred bowmen, made their attack on the flank of the dauphin's division. This movement threw the whole division into confusion. The archers shot so well and thickly that the dauphin's second division dispersed in haste. The knights, alarmed for their horses left in the rear, were the first to run from their banners, and all was instantly one scene of flight. The dauphin and his brother were escorted from the spot by eight hundred lances, under the knights Landas, Bodenai, and St. Venant; and the army of the Black Prince seeing this, and that the duke of Orleans was in full retreat with his van-guard, sprang to their saddles, shouting, "St. George for Guienne!" and Sir John Chandos exclaimed to the prince, "Sire, ride forward, the day is won! Let us charge on the king of France, for well I know that he is too bold to flee, and there only will the battle be; and we shall take him, please God and St. George!" "Advance banners, in the name of God and St. George!" cried the prince, and they dashed down the lane, bearing all before them, riding over dead and wounded, till they came out on the plain where the king yet stood with his division, and they burst upon them with a fearful shock. But the king stood his ground, fighting manfully, leading up his division on foot and hewing his way with his battle-axe; so that, says Froissart, had the knights of king John fought as well, the issue of the day might have been different. The constable of France stood firmly by his sovereign with his squadron of horse, shouting, "Mountjoy, St. Denis!" but before the impetuous onset of the English men-at-arms, his troops were cut down and himself was slain. Then the prince of Wales attacked a body of German cavalry, under the count Sallebruche and two other generals, and there was a desperate conflict; but the German generals were all killed, and then the cavalry gave way and left the king almost alone. Still the king fought on, and refused to surrender, though his few remaining followers were fast falling, and his nobles one after another sunk around him. His son, the boy of fourteen, fighting bravely in defence of his father, was wounded, and the king might easily have been slain, but every one was anxious to take him alive. Several who attempted to seize him he felled to the ground. When called upon to yield he still cried out, "Where is my cousin, the prince of Wales?" unwilling to surrender to any one of less rank. A knight from St. Omer, who had been banished for homicide, said, "Sire, the prince is not here; but I will conduct you to him." "But who are you?" demanded the king; and the knight replied, "I am Denis de Morbeque, a knight of Artois, but serving the king of England because I cannot belong to France, having been banished thence."

"I surrender to you," said the king, giving his glove to Sir Denis. But there was violent struggling for possession of the king, every one saying, "I took him," and some of the rude soldiers declaring that they would kill him if not surrendered to them. At this moment arrived the earl of Warwick, sent by the Black Prince to discover what was become of the king, and he conducted John and his son with great respect to the prince's tent.

Thus terminated the battle of Poictiers, one of the most wonderful victories ever achieved, being won by an army numerically only one-sixth of that which it defeated, and fighting under the disadvantage of being surrounded in the enemy's country, and against the king of France in person with all his chivalry. Thus stood king John, a captive at the end of the fight where, without striking a single blow, he might have expelled the English army from his soil, and bound the formidable prince of Wales to a peace of seven years.

The true glory, therefore, of the Black Prince was that, so far from taunting John with this, he received him with the utmost courtesy. He advanced from his tent to meet the captive king with every mark of respect and regard. He bade him not think too much of the fortune of war, but to bear in mind that he had won the admiration of both armies, and the fame of the bravest man who had fought on that side. He caused a banquet to be spread in his tent for the king and his dauntless son, who thenceforward, from his stoical heroism, bore the name of Philip the Hardy. Edward refused to sit down at the table, as being only a vassal of the king of France. He said, "You shall find my father ready to show you all honour and friendship, and you shall, if you will, become such friends as you have never yet been." The king was so much touched by the respect and kindness of Edward, that he declared, though defeated, it was no loss of honour to yield to a prince of such consummate valour and generosity.

The attendants of the king are said to have been affected to tears by the noble conduct and consoling words of the prince to their royal master, and the spirit spread through the army towards all the prisoners. Edward also showed the same spirit of justice and liberality towards others. He presented to Sir James Audley five hundred marks of yearly revenue for his services in the action; and when he found that he had transferred the whole of it to his four squires, he again settled four hundred pounds yearly upon him. He also heard all the eager and conflicting claims respecting the capture of the king, the distinction and the ransom being equally alluring objects; and finally adjudged it impartially, not to any of his own great barons, but to the poor French exile Sir Denis de Morbeque.

The prince conducted his royal prisoner to Bordeaux,

whence, in the following April, he set sail with him and his son for London. They made their entrance into the English capital on the 24th of that month, 1357, landing at Southwark, whence they rode in procession through the city to Westminster; vast crowds attending them the whole way to satiate their wonder at the novel spectacle of the monarch of France riding there as a captive. He was clad in his royal robes, and mounted on a white steed of remarkable size and beauty, while the prince of Wales rode by his side clad in a much plainer dress, and on a black palfrey. This might, to our present ideas, have appeared an aping of humility, but it was doubtless dictated to the prince by a chivalrous courtesy, and presented a fine contrast to the savage pomp of a Roman triumph, in which great kings and queens, amid all the spoils of their ravaged realms, were made to walk in chains, while the proud conqueror rode in his chariot blazing with gold.

It was, indeed, a time of singular triumph to the English people, for there were now two captive kings, those of France and Scotland, in their metropolis. Edward III. advanced to meet king John at the gates of his palace with the greatest courtesy, and received him, not as a prisoner, but as a neighbouring potentate arrived on a social visit.

The king of Scots had now been a captive in England eleven years. There had been no want of endeavours on the part of the Scots or of the king of England to effect his liberation. During the early portion of David's captivity this was not so much the case, because there was a strong leaning in him towards the French alliance, a natural result of his nine years' kind entertainment in that kingdom in his early youth. But his sojourn in England produced as decided an attachment to the English; and Edward, perceiving this, was willing to have on the throne of Scotland a friend who might counteract the hostile tendency of the nobles. During the last six years various negotiations had been entered into with the Scots for the release of David, but the ransom was considered by them too high. In 1351 this cause broke off the treaty; in 1354 the Scots agreed to give a ransom of ninety thousand marks, payable in nine years. But their French allies, dreading an amicable state of things between Scotland and England, having lately lost Calais, and being then threatened with a fresh invasion by the English, induced the Scots to break the agreement. The effect of this measure was speedily seen in an invasion of England by the Scots, which compelled Edward to return from Normandy, and was followed by his celebrated raid, called the "Burnt Candlemas," in Scotland. Now, however, a treaty was concluded, in which the Scots consented to pay one hundred thousand marks in ten years, giving hostages for the due fulfilment of this compact. In November of this year, 1357, David was restored to liberty, and returned to his kingdom; and before reverting to the prosecution of the war with France, we may briefly state what were the consequences of this transaction.

It soon became evident that the abode of David at the English court had produced the same effect as that formerly made upon him by his residence in the court of France. His facile and amiable but weak mind had been completely won over by Edward, who now saw, as he imagined, a quieter and more effectual mode of securing the crown of Scotland than by war. David had lost his wife, the sister of Edward, but had no children. He had grown fonder of the more polished and luxurious court of England than of his own ruder country and turbulent nobles. He did not, therefore, hesitate, after the death of his wife, to propose to the Scottish parliament that in case of his dying without issue, Edward's third son, the duke of Cambridge, should succeed him. The Scots, of course, rejected the proposal without ceremony. Still it was well known that a secret treaty existed between David and Edward III. for this object. In 1371 David died, and Robert Stewart, the grandson of Robert Bruce, by David's eldest sister Marjory, succeeded to the throne, by the full consent of the Scottish parliament, under the title of Robert II. Though Edward menaced, he never asserted his new claim to the crown, for his hands were full with the French war, and, soon after, the death of his son, the Black Prince, put an end to all such ideas. From that time to the reign of James VI., a period of two hundred and thirty-two years, the Stewarts continued to reign, when they also succeeded to the crown of England, and thus prepared the way for the ultimate and entire union of the kingdoms.

The battle of Poictiers filled up the measure of the calamities of France. Creçy was a decisive blow; the loss of Calais was another. But these were still only a minor portion of the losses and miseries which had been crowding upon her through ten years of invasion. Normandy, Artois, Picardy, and the southern provinces of France had been repeatedly traversed by hostile armies, their fields laid waste, their cattle driven off or destroyed, their crops trodden under foot; their cities, towns, and villages burnt or pillaged. By sea or by land France had suffered defeat and heavy loss of men, ships, and property. At Sluys, in mid-channel, and on various parts of the coast, the English had destroyed her fleets. In defending her ally of Brittany, Charles of Blois, her treasures had been largely drawn upon; and now came this desolating overthrow, in which the flower of her nobility was crushed or made captive with their king.

That captivity let loose all the elements of disorder which had been accumulating through these terrible years. The people were impoverished, and numbers of them utterly ruined; all were wretched and discontented. The nobles were grown arrogant with the weakness of the state, and the country was overrun with bands of armed marauders, calling themselves "Free Companions," who preyed at will on the already sorely fleeced people, committing every species of outrage, and thus aggravating awfully the miseries of the nation.

The dauphin was only a youth of eighteen, and though possessed of superior talents, and unusual prudence and spirit for his age, was necessarily destitute of that authority and that experience which such a crisis required, and his two younger brothers could afford him no assistance in so difficult a position. Besides the want of support in the members of his own family, he had a most dangerous and indefatigable enemy in his relative the king of Navarre, who possessed that determined disposition to mischief which most truly entitled him to the name given him by the public, Charles the Bad.

He was still in prison, but he found means through stone walls to exercise his pre-eminent talents for intrigue, treachery, and malicious machinations. Pretending even to the crown, he had all the seditious arts and fiery reckless-

ness of the demagogue; and he stooped to ally himself with any malcontent class, or to work with any dirty tool. Accordingly, when the dauphin called together the states of the kingdom to enable him to obtain supplies, and reasonably imagining that he should find all classes, under the calamitous condition of the country, ready to unite with him for the restoration of the king, and the re-establishment of order, he was met by demands for the limitation of the royal prerogative, the punishment of past offenders, and, above all, for the release of the king of Navarre.

Undoubtedly there were many evils to redress, and abuses of the royal power to complain of; but this was not the time when honourable men would have sought to enforce these objects. It was taking a cowardly advantage of the unfortunate position of a mere youth, to wrest from him what he had no legal authority to yield. Brave and upright men would have brought back the monarch, and from him demanded those measures which justice and the circumstances of the kingdom required. But what should have been reform was dastardly and lawless faction; and the very naming of the king of Navarre, the evil genius of France, betrayed its real origin. Marcel, the provost of the merchants, was the determined tool of Charles of Navarre, who put himself at the head of the mob, and endeavoured to terrify the dauphin into submission to his demands. The states, influenced by the same spirit, demanded the entire change of the king's ministers, the punishment of several of them; and dividing itself into separate committees, attempted to usurp the different departments of the executive. The dauphin was only to act under the control of a council of thirty-six members of the states-general, in which were to reside the powers of the whole body, and the king of Navarre was at once to be liberated. The dauphin, temporised with the art of a much older man, till he had obtained from the states some supplies, with which he proposed to put down disorders in the provinces, and then he dissolved the states, spite of the citizens of Paris, headed by Marcel and Ronsac the sheriff.

Freed from this millstone about his neck, Charles despatched Sir Robert de Clermont, a brave commander, into Normandy, against Sir Godfrey de Harcourt, who was again gone over to the English, in resentment for the execution of his brother, Count Harcourt, as one of the adherents of the factious king of Navarre.

Sir Robert de Clermont came up with Sir Godfrey near Coutances, in November, 1356, and not only routed his forces, but slew him. Soon after this a truce was made with the English in Normandy; but still the captains of Edward pursued their predatory career in Brittany and Gascony. To complete the mischief, the king of Navarre escaped from his prison at Creave-cœur, and was received with raptures by the disaffected people of Amiens and Paris. He harangued the people in those cities; and seemed, by the drift of his speeches, to aim at a republic. His brother, Philip of Navarre, remained in the English camp, and denounced the idea of a republic as pregnant with disorder, mutability, and bloodshed.

Charles, the dauphin, was compelled to call the states general together again, to demand fresh taxes for the prosecution of the war; but Marcel, the democratic provost, uniting with the king of Navarre, opposed all his measures, and excited the people to violence. He caused them to assume blue hats, as a badge of their adherence to his party, which from its co-operation with Charles of Navarre was also called the Navarrese party.

Matters now ripened apace from anarchy into civil war. In February, 1358, a man of the name of Macé, having murdered the treasurer of France, took refuge in a church. The dauphin ordered him to be fetched thence, and put to death. But when Robert de Clermont and John de Conflans, the marshals of France, went to execute this command, the bishop of Paris protested against it as a violation of the sanctuary of the church; and Marcel, the provost, seizing so admirable an opportunity for bearding the dauphin, marched with the whole mob of Paris to his palace, then called the Palais de Justice. Entering without any regard to the person of the dauphin, he seized the two marshals, and put them to death so close to the prince that his dress was sprinkled with their blood. "How now," cried the dauphin; "will you shed the blood royal of France?" Marcel replied "No;" and to show his pacific intentions, he rudely snatched from the dauphin's head the embroidered hat of a pale rose colour, put it on his own head, and clapped his own blue hat on that of the dauphin. The bodies of the murdered marshals were dragged through the streets, where, during the day, Marcel went about in the dauphin's hat.

Thus the capital of France was reduced to the utmost anarchy. The dauphin returned into Picardy and Champagne, where he assembled the states of those provinces, and was aided by them to the best of their ability. But all France was one scene of discord, insurrection, violence, and crime. The mercenary and predatory bands of the Companions, many of whom, or at least their leaders, were English, were engaged by the king of Navarre to carry out his projected republic. The dauphin, on the other side, assembled forces to oppose him; and now broke out one of the most frightful calamities which can afflict a nation—that of a peasants' war. In the reign of Richard II. in England, some few years after this time, our own country was on the verge of such a horrible state of things, under Wat Tyler and Jack Straw. At the time of the Reformation, Germany experienced its unspeakable atrocities, under the name of the Bauern Krieg, or War of the Peasantry, and France now was doomed to drink deeply of its demon horrors, under the name of the *Jaquerie*, from the gentry being used to call the peasants Jaques Bonhomme, or Goodman James.

The country-people, ground by a long course of exaction, oppression, and insult, treated more as beasts than men by their feudal lords, now seized the moment, when the government was beset with difficulties and enemies, to take a blind, sweeping, and tremendous vengeance. The nobility and the petty gentry holding fiefs under them had all been accustomed to plunder, tread on, and abuse the peasantry as a race of inferior creatures. The feudal system had run to seed in unbridled license, and in every species of infuriating wrong. Ignorant and outraged, the people, once broke loose, placed no limits to their cruelties and revenge. They despised the nobles, who, while they had oppressed them, had, in base cowardice, deserted their sovereign at Poictiers. Formerly crushed down into slaves, they were now terrible masters. They burnt and laid waste the country everywhere, plundered the villages, and cut off the supplies of the terrified towns. They attacked the castles of the

nobles, burnt them to the ground, chased their once proud owners like wild beasts into the woods, committed horrors which cannot be named on the helpless women, murdered them and the children without mercy, and, as in Germany afterwards, actually roasted some of their former harsh lords before slow fires.

Of the frightful situation to which the highest ladies of the country were reduced, Froissart gives a striking example. The duchess of Normandy, the duchess of Orleans, and nearly three hundred ladies, young girls, and children, had fled for refuge to the strong town of Meaux, and were besieged by nine or ten thousand of the furious Jaquerie, when they were threatened with every horror that human nature could endure. Fortunately two famous knights of the directly opposite parties, the count of Foix, and the brave Captal de Buche, who made the successful rear assault at the battle of Poictiers, hearing of the alarming situation of these high ladies, forgot their hostility, united their forces, and falling on the Jaquerie, put them to the sword, killing seven thousand of them, and rescuing the terrified women.

The dauphin, on his part, did not spare the insurgents. He cut them down like sheep wherever he could meet with them. In one case he is said to have killed more than twenty thousand of them. The Sire de Coucî, in Picardy and Artois, mowed them down like grass, and soon cleared that part of the country of them. Everywhere the knights and gentry, roused by the ferocious deeds of the Jaquerie towards their families, collected, and easily overcoming their undisciplined mobs, slaughtered them in heaps like beasts without mercy. At the same time, Marcel, endeavouring to complete his crime by betraying Paris to the king of Navarre and the English, was killed by the exasperated people, and thus the land was eventually reduced to quiet. But it was a quiet like that described by the Roman historian:—"*Solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant:* they make a solitude, and call it peace." No country was ever reduced to a more awful condition of ruin and wide-spread desolation; this frightful Jaquerie pest lasted nearly two years.

Meantime Edward had worked on his captive, king John of France, to make a peace, restoring to England all the provinces which had belonged to Henry II. and his two sons, for ever; but the dauphin and the states rejected the treaty, which would have totally ruined the kingdom. On this Edward once more invaded that devoted country, assembled an army of one hundred thousand men, with which he overran Picardy and Champagne, besieged Rheims but without success, advanced into Burgundy, and pillaged Tonnerre, Gaillon, and Avalon, marched into the Nivérnois, and laid waste Brie and the Gatinois, and sat down before Paris, where, not being able to draw the dauphin into a battle, he proceeded to devastate the provinces of Maine, Beausse, and the Chartraine. It is said that his desolating career was at length closed by a terrible thunderstorm by which he was overtaken near Chartres, in which the terrors of heaven seemed to his awe-struck imagination to be arrayed against him. "Looking towards the church of Notre Dame, at Chartres," says Froissart, "he made a vow to grant peace, which he afterwards humbly repeated in confession in the cathedral of Chartres, and thus took up his lodging in the village of Britigni, near that city."

Here the peace was concluded; and on these conditions: that the king of France should pay three millions of gold crowns for his ransom, about a million and a half of our money. That he should yield up to Edward in full sovereignty, the province of Gascony and other dependencies in Aquitaine, and in the north of France, Calais, Guisnes, Montreuil, and the country of Ponthieu; and Edward on the other hand should renounce all other French territory, and all claim to the crown and kingdom of France. The king of Navarre was to be restored to all his honours and possessions, and the alliances of Edward with the Flemings and of John with the Scots were to close. In consequence of this peace of Britigni, signed the 24th of October, 1360, John returned to France; but finding that his government was unwilling to keep faith with England, and his son the duke of Anjou having broken his parole as a hostage, John, with a noble sense of honour, refused to be a party to such dishonesty, and returning voluntarily to his captivity in London, died there on the 8th of April, 1364.

Charles V., the fifty-first monarch of France, succeeded his father John to a kingdom desolate but not dismembered. John had, indeed, added to the realm the provinces of Dauphiny and Burgundy; but the latter he again dissevered from the crown and settled on his favourite son, his companion at the battle of Poictiers and in his captivity. This unwise act, the result, not of prudence—in which John was singularly deficient—but of affection, became the source of much contention and many miseries. But miseries were the order of the day. France was overrun with them as with weeds.

Charles had been early taught in the school of adversity, and he soon displayed proofs that he had profited by its lessons. He was cautious, thoughtful how to retrieve the condition of France, and eventually won the name of the Wise. Had his designation been the Worldly Wise it would have been still more correct, for he was not too strict in rendering the code of honour where it interfered with his plans. He was the first of his race and his times who renounced the practice of heading his armies, deeming it more befitting a monarch to head his kingdom, and place at the head of his armies the ablest commanders that he could obtain, as he would place the ablest ministers over the different departments of his government. This very circumstance marks Charles as a sagacious prince. The practice was a step onward in governmental science.

Charles deemed it necessary to reduce the disorders of his own kingdom before he commenced his intended operations against the English. It was necessary to put down Charles of Navarre, and to settle the affairs of Brittany, To do this, he first sent the young Breton knight, Bertrand du Guesclin, destined to acquire a great renown in this reign, into Normandy, where the brave Captal de Buche, the hero of Poictiers, commanded the king of Navarre's forces. These two commanders met near Cocherel, where Du Guesclin turned the tide of war in favour of France, gaining the first complete victory for it since the days of Crecy, and not only routed De Buche, but took him prisoner.

Du Guesclin then marched into Brittany, where lord Chandos and Sir Hugh Calverley were in command of the English forces. Here Du Guesclin's good fortune deserted him; he was defeated and taken prisoner. Here, also, Charles of Blois was slain, and the young De Montfort secured in his possessions. The prudence of Charles V. now was seen conspicuously; instead of resuming the war, he acknowledged De Montfort as rightful lord of the

duchy, though a strong partisan of England, admitted him to do homage for the fief, and thus bound him in a certain degree to him by kindness; a display of political philosophy too much neglected by Edward III. of England and his son the Black Prince.

Finding the estates of the crown greatly reduced by weak grants made by his father and former monarchs to the princes and nobles about them, he set himself to reclaim them, and thus restore the national finances, an undertaking which would have ruined a weak or imprudent king. But he prosecuted this design with such consummate address and persuasive mildness,—showing its absolute necessity if France were to enable herself to shake off the incubus of the English, and beginning with his own uncle, the duke of Orleans,—that he carried it through triumphantly. This done, he proceeded to rid the nation of the bands of Free Companions which preyed on the very vitals of the kingdom. At the peace of Britigni, the disbanded soldiery of Edward, men from almost every European country, being scattered over the land, and being in possession of many of the strongholds, refused to lay down their arms. They were accustomed to a life of the utmost license under the English king and prince, and they determined to continue it. They associated together for mutual defence, in such combination calling themselves the "Great Companies." Both English and Gascon officers now took the command of these freebooters, who became the scourge of the provinces. Sir Hugh Calverley, Sir Matthew Gournay, and the chevalier Verte, were their most distinguished leaders. These troops amounted to forty thousand, and did not fear to encounter the armies of France. They fought with them and beat them, and killed Jaques de Bourbon, a prince of the blood. The more they spoiled and ravaged, the more their numbers grew, for they were increased by those who sought for booty, and by those who were left without any other resource. People flocked to them precisely as they did in ancient times to David, in the cave of Adullam: "Every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him." The pope excommunicated them, but though that ban, so awful in that age, alarmed, it did not disperse them.

Charles at first complained to Edward warmly that his forces were not disbanded according to the treaty, and called upon him to see them dispersed; but when Edward, finding proclamations for the purpose unheeded, declared that he would himself march against them, Charles took alarm at the prospect of seeing an English army again on the soil of France, and hastened to request him to spare himself that trouble; he would deal with them in his own way. His mode of ridding himself of them was worthy of his enlightened mind. He used all his persuasions to engage them in foreign wars. He represented to them what a rich field the wars of Italy presented to them, and a large body, under one Hawkwood, an Englishman, proceeded thither and won great wealth and distinction. Fortune favoured the plans of the king, and opened a still wider field of action for the troublesome Free Companions. Pedro, the king of Castile, at that time was one of the most bloody monsters who ever disgraced a throne. He indulged his savage disposition by the murder of his own near relations, and the nobles about the court. He had put to death several of his natural brothers for fear of their conspiring against him. The murder of one noble led him to that of others, whom he dreaded might attempt retaliation. His court was become a perfect hell of blood and terror, and that terror alone prevented his dethronement. But, instigated by Mary de Padilia, his mistress, he poisoned his wife, the sister of the queen of Charles of France. At this, Enrique, count of Transtamara, and Tello, count of Biscay, his natural brothers, who had taken arms against him in vain, fled to the court of France, and implored Charles to avenge the sister of his queen, and rid the country of this modern Nero.

Charles embraced the proposal as the evident beckoning hand of a good Providence. He procured the liberty of Du Guesclin, who was still a prisoner to lord Chandos, set him to bring over the chiefs of the Companions, and take command under him for a feigned expedition against the Moors in Spain, which was regarded as a crusade against the infidels. The pope, who had his cause of quarrel with the monster Pedro, gave his blessing to the scheme, and Du Guesclin speedily found himself at the head of thirty thousand of these desperadoes. The king of France gave them two hundred thousand francs; and, assembling at Chalons, on the river Marne, they marched towards Avignon. The pope, who then resided there, alarmed at the approach of such a force, sent a cardinal to learn their object in coming that way. Du Guesclin answered that as they were bound on a crusade against the enemies of the church, they sought the pope's blessing, and the small sum of two hundred thousand florins to help them on their way. His holiness readily promised the blessing and absolution of all their sins—an awful score! But Du Guesclin replied that his followers were of that description that they would, if necessary, dispense with the absolution, but not with the money. The pope then proposed to levy the sum of one hundred thousand florins on the inhabitants, but Du Guesclin said they were not come to oppress the innocent people, but would expect the money out of the pope's own coffers. His holiness thought it well to comply with a request backed by such arguments as thirty thousand notorious banditti, and the bold beggars marched on. They very soon drove the tyrant from his throne and kingdom, who fled, with his two daughters, into Guienne, and put himself under the protection of the Black Prince.

In all the wars of Edward III. against Scotland and France, he had shown an utter disregard of right; and in this respect he was fully seconded by the Black Prince; but of all their undertakings there was none so flagrantly outraging every principle of justice, humanity, and chivalry as their abetting this demon in human shape, Don Pedro of Castile. Here was a man steeped in the blood of his own family and of his own wife; who had oppressed and plundered his subjects till they hated him with a mortal hatred, and had joined in chasing him from the country. Edward, as a professed champion of chivalry, was bound to defend and redress the grievances of ladies; yet, here did he at once undertake to restore the murderer of his wife to his ensanguined throne, and to force him again on a people whom he had driven to desperation by his ferocious tyrannies. It has been attempted to vindicate this action by representing Don Pedro as the *legitimate* sovereign, whom, therefore, the prince, as an upholder of legitimate authority, was bound to support. But the fact is, that Edward and his father had all their lives been engaged in endeavouring, by all the

COMBAT BETWEEN ENGLISH AND FRENCH KNIGHTS IN A SQUARE AT LIMOGES. (See page 400.)

force of their talents and the resources of their kingdom to destroy legitimacy in the person of the king of France. It has been again urged that the king of France sanctioning the expedition to dethrone Don Pedro naturally aroused the rivalry of the Black Prince, who would probably, say these authors, never have succoured the infamous Pedro had not the king of France taken the other side. But the worst of it is, that the king of France was on the right side, the just and honourable one—that of punishing a murderer of his own relative, and of assisting an oppressed people. The prince of Wales was on the wrong side—the odious one of abetting as foul a monster as ever disgraced humanity; and his proceeding was as impolitic as it was unjust, for it raised a new enemy, the reigning king of Castile, Don Enrique, and threw him into the alliance of France. The conduct of the Black Prince in this affair proved that, with all his personal virtues, he was destitute of that high moral sense—that perception of what is intrinsically great and noble—which stamps the true hero; and the hand of Providence appears speedily and unequivocally to have displayed itself against him and his father, who sanctioned his fatal enterprise. All his wisest and most faithful counsellors urged him to reflect on the crimes and blood-stained character of Don Pedro; to remember that such men were as ungrateful as they were base; and also that the expedition must be attended by severe charges on the province of Gascony, already loudly complaining of its burthens.

These just admonitions were all lost on the prince. He assembled a force, recalling his officers from the bands of the Companions, twelve thousand of whom, on learning that he was about to take the field, left Du Guesclin, headed by Sir Hugh Calverley and Sir Robert Knowles, and followed his banners, believing in the ascendency of his fortune, and careless of every other motive. The prince of Wales came into action with the troops of Don Enrique and Du Guesclin at Najara, routed them with a loss of twenty thousand men, and easily reinstated the tyrant upon the throne. But there the success of the Black Prince ceased. He could not make the monster Pedro anything but a monster; and he immediately displayed his diabolical disposition by proposing to the prince to murder all their prisoners in cold blood, which the prince indignantly refused.

And now the punishment of the prince of Wales for this unhappy deed—a foul blot for ever on his brilliant escutcheon—came fast and heavily upon him; so fast, so heavily, so palpably, that the writers of the time plainly ascribed it to the displeasure of a righteous Providence. The tyrant, once restored, gave him immediate proof of the miserable work he had done, by refusing to fulfil a single stipulation that he had made. He left the prince's army without the pay so liberally promised, and without provisions. The prince was exposed to the murmurs of his deluded soldiers. The heat of the climate and strange and unwholesome food began to sweep them off in great numbers, whilst his own health gave way, never to be restored. He made his way back to Bordeaux as well as he could, where he arrived in July, 1367, with a ruined constitution, and covered with debts, incurred on behalf of the ungrateful tyrant. To discharge the debt due to his troops, he laid a tax on hearths, not unknown in England, but new to the Gascons, which was calculated to produce 1,200,000 francs a year. But the inhabitants resented this tax on their chimneys, or *fouage*, as they called it, excessively. It was the climax to a host of grievances of which they began vehemently to complain; as, of all offices and honours being conferred on foreigners; of harsh treatment, like that of a conquered people; and, as the Black Prince did not pay any attention to their complaints, the counts of Armagnac, Comminge, Perigord, and d'Albret carried them to the king of France, as their ancient lord paramount.

While the prince of Wales was thus about to be embroiled with France, on account of his ill-fated restoration of Don Pedro, he had the mortification to learn that that savage had only regained his throne to wreak the most diabolical cruelties on his subjects, whom he now regarded as rebels. Du Guesclin, having obtained his ransom, once more joined Enrique de Transtamara to expel the despot. He defended himself with desperate valour, but he was eventually defeated, and blockaded in the castle of Montiel. As he had only about a dozen men with him, and the castle was destitute of provisions, Don Pedro attempted to steal out at night; but he was seized by a French officer, and such was the implacable fury of the two brothers against each other, that, as soon as Don Enrique heard of his capture, he flew to the tent where he was in custody. There, after insulting and irritating each other, the two proceeded to a deadly struggle, in which Don Enrique stabbed Pedro to the heart with his dagger.

Such were the fruits for which the prince of Wales had sacrificed his honour, his life, as it proved, and the peace of his provinces. The wary Charles V. had long been eagerly watching the proceedings of the English. He had on various pretences deferred the fulfilment of the conditions of the treaty of Britigni, and now on the plea that it was void, he summoned the Black Prince to Paris, as his vassal, to answer the complaints of his subjects. The treaty of Britigni liberated the English provinces from all feudal subjection, and made them independent. When the heralds conveyed the summons to the Black Prince, his eyes flamed with indignation at this breach of faith; he looked furiously on the messengers, and exclaimed, "Is it even so? Does our fair cousin desire to see us at Paris? Gladly will we go thither; but I assure you, sirs, that it shall be with our basnets on our heads, and at the head of sixty thousand men."

The messengers dropped on their knees in terror, begging him to remember that they only did the message of him who sent them. But the prince, deigning them no word, left them in wrath; and the courtiers ordered them to get away as fast as they could; but the prince hearing of their departure, sent after them and brought them back, but did them no injury.

Thus were England and France once more plunged into war through the ill-timed restoration of a base tyrant; with general discontent in the English provinces in the south of France, and the health of the prince fast failing. The French king had carefully calculated the declining vigour of Edward III., as well as the health of his son; and now he advanced to war to regain the territories he had lost, and avenge the mortal injuries which his country had suffered from the English, attended by a host of advantageous circumstances. These were, discontent in the English provinces, and disunion amongst the commanders of the forces. On his own side he had with him the spirit and wishes of the whole country. Many of the great

commanders who had assisted to win the proud laurels of Edward and the Black Prince were dead, or sunk into old age. The Free Companions, who had served under the Black Prince, were dismissed from the want of that very pay which the tyrant Pedro had refused, and were now eagerly engaged by the French king. The feudal troops and the archery of England, the very soul of the army, had returned home at the end of the war, and it would now require much time and expenditure of money to collect them again.

On the other hand, a new generation had sprung up in France, who had not known the terrors of Creçy or Poictiers, but only had heard of the defeat of France and the death of their fathers, and burned to avenge them. The terrible king of England was old: his lion-hearted son was known to be sinking into the grave. It seemed as if the doom of Heaven was pronounced on the power of the English. They had overrun and destroyed, but taken no pains to conciliate, and the hatred which flamed in the hearts of the people was fanned and made holy by the universal voice of the clergy, producing everywhere revolt from the English, and adhesion to the French monarch. Charles had prepared for this crisis for years, husbanding his income till he was called not only the Wise, but the Wealthy; and the people, now kindled with the spirit of patriotism, submitted cheerfully to new taxes for reconquering the independence of their country, even to that same *fouage* which, imposed in Gascony, had cost the prince of Wales his popularity: so much does the payment of a tax depend on the person who imposes it, and the purpose for which it is demanded.

Still the Black Prince, though ill, was not cast down. Some of the Free Companions, spite of the defection of their fellows, joined him to the amount of six thousand lances, under the brave Sir Hugh Calverley; and Edward III. sent from England a considerable army under the command of the earl of Cambridge, the prince's brother, and Sir John Hastings, the earl of Pembroke, his brother-in-law.

The king of France fell on the province of Ponthieu, which gave the English admittance into the heart of France. The people everywhere received him with open arms, showing how completely all the efforts of England to conquer France had been thrown away. The citizens of Abbeville opened their gates to him. Those of St. Valeri, Rue, and Crotoy followed their example, and in a very little time the whole country was regained by the French.

In Poictou the brothers of Charles, the dukes of Berri and Anjou, assisted by the gallant Du Guesclin, were equally successful. Lord Audley, the son of that Sir James Audley who distinguished himself so greatly at the battle of Poictiers, who was seneschal of the province, fell sick and died in the very commencement of the war, to the extreme grief of the prince, who made the celebrated Sir John Chandos his successor. But jealousies amongst the commanders, now the prince of Wales was unable to be at the head of his armies, produced disastrous consequences, and worse very soon followed in the death of the brave Chandos. That enterprising leader proposed to the earl of Pembroke to join him in an expedition against Louis de Sancerre, the marshal of France. But Pembroke, jealous of the fame of Sir John, and instigated by his flatterers, who insinuated that with such a renowned general the earl would come off with very little of the glory of the undertaking, declined the proposal. Sir John Chandos, disgusted by the refusal, retired into the city of Poictiers, and dismissed such troops as were not necessary for its defence.

No sooner had he done this, than the earl of Pembroke issued forth with two hundred spears to win distinction for himself, and waste the lands of the nobles who were opposed to the Black Prince's taxation. This was good news for the marshal Sancerre, who had little fear when he learned that Chandos had retired in displeasure. He came suddenly with an overwhelming force on Pembroke near the village of Puyrenon, killed a considerable number of his knights, and compelled him to take refuge in an old church of the abolished Knights Templars. Pembroke, now awake to his folly, despatched a messenger to Sir John Chandos for help. The messenger did not reach Poictiers till the next morning, when Sir John was at breakfast. On hearing Pembroke's appeal, he coolly went to mass, glad, no doubt, to let the envious nobleman feel the effects of his foolish conduct. Meantime the battle at the church was going on vigorously, the English stoutly defending their retreat, but feeling from the thinness of the walls, and want of provisions, that they could not hold out long. Another messenger was despatched to Sir John, accompanied by a most earnest entreaty, and a valuable ring from the finger of the earl himself. Sir John was at dinner when the messenger arrived, describing in earnest words the imminent danger of the earl and his followers. Sir John had not yet forgiven the young nobleman. He went on with his dinner, saying, "If it be as you say, nothing can save him." But anon, lifting up his head, he said to his knights and esquires around him, "Hear me, sirs! the earl of Pembroke is a noble person, and of high lineage, son-in-law to our natural lord, the king of England. Foul shame were it to see him lost, if we can save him. I will go, by the grace of God. Make ready, sirs, for Puyrenon!"

Two hundred men-at-arms mounted in haste, and, Sir John at their head, galloped off to surprise the marshal of Sancerre while besieging Pembroke in the Temple-house. But the wary French, apprised of the approach of Sir John, speedily drew off and escaped.

In December of the same year, 1370, Sir John Chandos lost his life in a confused skirmish, owing to want of proper co-operation amongst the English commanders; and his loss was soon obvious in a greater lack of spirit and success in the English army in the south of France; the gallant Captal de Buche, who preceded Sir John as seneschal of Guienne, being taken prisoner, and lost to the English service.

Meantime Edward III. had sent fresh forces to Calais under his son the duke of Lancaster, commonly called John of Gaunt, in alliance with the count of Namur. The king of France sent a still larger army to oppose the inroads of these forces under his brother Philip, the duke of Burgundy, but commanded him on no account to come to a general engagement with the English, lest the fate of Creçy and Poictiers should once more overtake him. The duke posted himself between St. Omer and Tournehan, where the duke of Lancaster came out against him, but could not induce the French to fight. The duke of Burgundy, impatient of this inglorious position, desired to be recalled, and the king ordered him to fall back on Paris. Then John of Gaunt

advanced, pillaging and laying waste the country in the old English manner from Calais to Bordeaux, while Sir Robert Knowles, the Free Companion leader, with an army of thirty thousand men, took his way by Terouenne and through Artois, burning and destroying all before him. He next advanced to the very gates of Paris, up to which one of his knights rode, and struck a blow with his spear, having made a vow that he would strike his lance on the gate of Paris. The daring warrior, however, lost his life returning through the suburbs, being cut down by a gigantic butcher with his cleaver. After that Knowles marched into Brittany for winter quarters. On their march that fatal disunion which now infected the English army once more showed itself. Lord Grandison, lord Fitzwalter, and other English nobles, refused to follow Knowles into Brittany. They declared that it did not become noblemen like themselves to serve under a man of mean birth, as Sir Robert Knowles was, and they drew off their forces to Anjou and Touraine.

Bertrand du Guesclin, now made constable of France, hearing of this disunion from an English traitor, Sir John Menstreworth, pursued Knowles to cut him off. Knowles sent information of this pursuit to lord Grandison and his disdainful aristocratic companions; but too late, for Du Guesclin overtook them at Pont Volant, defeated them, and slew the greater part of these proud exclusives. Knowles made good his retreat into Brittany, and Menstreworth the traitor, falling into the hands of the English, was put to death.

About this time the Black Prince performed his last military exploit; and it was one calculated to become an additional brand on his name in France. Limoges, the capital of Limousin, had been betrayed to the dukes of Anjou and Berri by the bishop and the chief inhabitants. The prince was greatly enraged, both because the bishop had been his personal friend, and because he had conferred many privileges on the citizens. He was now too weak to mount a horse, but he ordered out twelve hundred lancers and two thousand archers, and being borne in an open litter at the head of his troops, he advanced to take vengeance on Limoges. The garrison treated with scorn his summons to surrender. But his sappers soon undermined the wall, though Du Guesclin did all he could by a flying force to draw off his attention. Some authors say that he there used gunpowder, lately introduced, to blow up the mine, as they contend that his father used cannon in the battle of Crecy. Others say that he threw down the wall by burning the props which supported the excavation while in progress. Whatever was now the mode, he made a breach, and his troops rushing in perpetrated the most ruthless and indiscriminate slaughter. The poor people, men, women, and children, knelt in the streets, and threw themselves down before the prince, crying, "Mercy! mercy for God's sake." But the inexorable prince turned a deaf ear to these moving prayers from the innocent people, who had nothing whatever to do with the surrender of the city, and four thousand were put to death. The only pity which he showed was to the bishop who gave up the place, and to a knot of brave knights whom he found standing with their backs to a wall, engaged in mortal combat with his brothers the dukes of Lancaster and Cambridge, and Pembroke his brother-in-law. After watching their gallant defence some time in high admiration, he consented to accept their submission, and dismissed them with praises. This extraordinary man—a striking proof how war can petrify a heart very noble by nature—could still feel delight in the spectacle of a brave feat of arms, though his soul was become utterly callous to every sentiment of pity for his fellowmen in general. He gave up the city to be sacked, and it was burnt to the ground.

In the early part of the following year he lost his eldest son, and his own health being now completely broken, he returned to England, quitting for ever, says an historian, the country where he had gained so much glory, and on which he had inflicted such extensive calamities. He left the duke of Lancaster his lieutenant, who maintained a court at Bordeaux as gay and brilliant as the prince himself. At this court were residing the two daughters of the late Don Pedro the Cruel; and John of Gaunt, now a widower, but in the prime of his life, married Donna Constance, the eldest, and in her right assumed the title of king of Castile and Leon; and his brother, the duke of Cambridge, married at the same time the second sister. This, as we have said of the Black Prince's expedition into Castile to reinstate the tyrant Don Pedro, was a most false and calamitous policy, for it made a firm ally of Enrique, now reigning king of Castile, to Charles of France; and of this the effect was speedily felt.

John of Gaunt went over to England to introduce his royal bride at court there; and the earl of Pembroke going out to supply his place in June, 1372, with a fleet of forty ships, was encountered off the port of Rochelle by a powerful navy belonging to king Enrique. The battle was fiercely contested; but the Spanish ships were not only much larger than those of the English, but provided with cannon, now for the first time employed at sea. The English were completely defeated; the greater part of their ships were taken, burnt, or sunk, including one carrying the military chest, with twenty thousand pounds. The earl of Pembroke, with many other men of rank, remained prisoners.

Such was the immediate effect of the English alliance with the family of such a monster as Don Pedro; and nothing could demonstrate more strongly the degree to which the English had made themselves detested in France than the eagerness with which the people of Rochelle and its neighbourhood, though still English subjects, aided the Spaniards by every means in their power.

This defeat and loss laid open the country to the attacks of the king of France, through his valiant and wise constable Du Guesclin, who took Benon, Surgere, Saint Jean d'Angely, and other towns. The duke of Lancaster set sail from England with a fresh army, accompanied by the earls of Suffolk, Warwick, Stafford, and lord Edward Spencer, to repel the French forces. But these forces, divided into three hosts, under the dukes of Burgundy and Bourbon, and Du Guesclin, still avoided any engagement, but watched the English army, harassed its rear, and cut off its foraging parties everywhere. In vain the duke of Lancaster marched from Bordeaux to Calais and back; everywhere the enemy fled before him, and yet everywhere he suffered loss; so that the king his father declared, with irrepressible vexation, "that there never was a monarch at once so little of a soldier and who contrived to give so much trouble." The last town possessed by the English in Gascony was Thouars, then a considerable

place. The constable invested it, and the English lords shut up in it—the best of those whom the long series of skirmishes and sieges had left—agreed to surrender it at the next Michaelmas, if the king of England or one of his sons did not relieve them within that period. Edward on hearing this put to sea with a considerable army; but winds and waves were steadily opposed to him, and he was compelled to put back, and leave Thouars to its fate. The last ally of Edward, the count de Montfort, was driven from his duchy by Du Guesclin and Oliver de Clisson, and compelled to take refuge in England. The duke of Lancaster marched to and fro, but gained no signal advantage, and Charles V., thinking that Edward's fortunes were too low again to reinstate the count of Brittany, proposed to the estates of France to confiscate his territory and annex it to the French crown; but this the nobles of Brittany opposed, and recalled John de Montfort from his exile in England.

In 1374, but two years previous to the death of the Black Prince, and three to the death of Edward himself, a truce was signed at Bruges between France and England for one year. The pope by his legates, who followed both armies, and attended both courts, had never remitted his Christian endeavours to put a stop to the barbarities of the war; but it was not till France had won almost all that it had lost that he could succeed. The truce was concluded and was maintained till the death of the king of England; at which time all that was left of his French possessions were Bordeaux, Bayonne, a few towns on the Dordogne, and Calais in the north. Such were the miserable fruits of all the human blood and lives expended, and all the miseries inflicted in these unjust and impolitic wars of more than forty years' duration.

When the Black Prince returned to England, broken down in constitution, he found things far from agreeable. The king was become feeble, and ruled by favourites. Great abuses had sprung up, and were carried on in the king's name. The duke of Lancaster had created a strong party for himself, and exercised the principal power. The prince, still growing weaker, yet roused himself to restrain the domination of Lancaster, and remove from about the person of the king his creatures. The Commons, as is supposed, by direct encouragement of the prince, impeached nearly all the ministers. They removed lord Latimer from the king's council, and put him in prison. They deprived lord Neville of the offices which he held, and arrested several farmers of the customs. They even carried their censures to the king's mistress, one Alice Pierce or Perrars. The excellent Philippa had been dead several years, and this Alice Perrars, who had been a lady of the bedchamber to the queen, had acquired the most complete influence over the old king. She was now banished from court.

Such were the unhappy affairs which clouded the last days of the celebrated Black Prince, and even tended to sow dissension between him and his father. He died on Trinity Sunday, the 8th of June, 1376, in the forty-sixth year of his age, to the immense regret of the people, who regarded his military achievements, though of no solid advantage to the nation, with a deep national pride, and, from his opposition to corruptions at home, esteemed him as a most patriotic prince. It is clear that he must have been of a naturally noble nature, and possessed of personal qualities as engaging as his courage and military genius were unrivalled; but his warlike education had blunted many of the finest feelings of the heart, and led him to become the scourge of France, and in a great measure useless to his own country. His body was drawn by twelve horses from London to Canterbury, the whole court and parliament following through the city; and he was buried in the cathedral, near the shrine of Thomas à Becket.

After his death the duke of Lancaster recovered his ascendency in the state and over the king, who, grown indolent, and devoted only to the society of his artful mistress, paid little attention to state affairs. John of Gaunt hastened to undo all that the Black Prince had effected. He caused his own steward, Sir Thomas Hungerford, to be made speaker of the House of Commons. He restored his faction there, and soon had Sir Peter de la Mare, the late speaker, arrested; and the celebrated William of Wykeham, bishop of Winchester, deprived of his temporalities, on charges of embezzlement which could not be proved, and dismissed from court. The duke went so far as not only to implore that the lord Latimer, but Alice Perrars, should be freed from the censures passed upon them by the late parliament in the name of the king, and restored to their former condition and privileges. The present parliament, however, was not so completely packed by John of Gaunt but that it possessed a spirit of opposition, which insisted that the accused should be put upon their trial; and the bishops demanded the same justice towards William of Wykeham, one of the greatest men of the age, the architect of Windsor Castle, the founder of Wykeham's College at Winchester, and of New College at Oxford.

It is said that we owe it to the resentment of John of Gaunt against the bishops that he took up so earnestly the cause of Wycliffe, the great English reformer, and thus became a most effectual champion and guardian of the Reformation. Wycliffe, who was a parish priest at this time, living at Lutterworth in Leicestershire, and the prebendary of Aust, in the collegiate church of Westbury, in the diocese of Worcester, had been a member of a legation sent by Edward to pope Gregory XI. which met at Bruges; and it is remarkable that this glimpse of the papal court is said to have had the same effect on him as the visit of Luther afterwards to Rome. He became a decided church reformer, and, holding the theological chair of Oxford, had ample opportunity of making public his ideas. His denunciations of church abuses, and opposition to many of its doctrines, had caused him to be cited by a convocation of the clergy to appear at St. Paul's on the 3rd of February, 1377, to answer to the charges against him. Here he was attended by John of Gaunt and the earl marshal, lord Percy. These noblemen and the bishops became mutually very hot on the question, and the duke of Lancaster is reported to have threatened to drag Courtney, the bishop of London, who presided, by the hair of the head out of the church. A riot was the consequence, the duke of Lancaster protecting Wycliffe; and the people, who were very jealous of Lancaster's overgrown power, resenting his insult to the bishop, broke both into his house and that of lord Percy, killing lord Percy's chaplain, and doing immense damage to the duke's palace. The two noblemen escaped across the water to Kennington, where the widow of the Black Prince, the "Fair Maid of Kent," and her

son Richard, the heir apparent, resided. The riot ran so high that the debates of parliament were interrupted, and the mob reversed the duke's arms as a traitor.

The king, completing the fiftieth year of his reign and the sixty-fourth of his life, published a general amnesty for all minor offences; still, however, through the influence of Lancaster, excluding the great Wykeham of Winchester. He was now fast failing, and passed his time between Eltham palace and his manor of Shene, near Richmond. The last days of this great monarch were like those of many others who, during their lives, ruled men with a high hand. It was desolate and deserted. The great nobles and courtiers were looking out for the rising sun, and paying it their assiduous adoration. By some this was held to be the duke of Lancaster, against whose designs on the throne the people had called on the king, before the death of the Black Prince, to guard; and he had named his grandson Richard, then not six years old, his successor. By others Richard was deemed the true fountain of future favour, and all deserted the dying king, except his deeply interested mistress, who, after securing everything else of value that she could, drew the diamond ring from the finger of the dying monarch, and—departed. The servants had gone before to plunder the house, and only a solitary, faithful priest, preferring his duty to the things of this world, hastened to the bedside of the departing monarch, held aloft his crucifix, and remained in that position till the once mighty king had breathed his last.

Englishmen look with pride to the reign of Edward III., as one of those which stamped the martial ascendency of their race; and unquestionably it is an era of great military glory. But beyond the glory, what was the genuine advantage won by Edward III. and his heroic son? Neither in France nor Scotland, the scenes of his feats of arms, did he retain a foot of the land which he conquered, except Calais and its little circle of environs. In fact, in France he had lost much territory which he inherited. Of all the time—a great and invaluable lifetime—spent, of all the human lives destroyed, and the taxes wrung from his people, consumed, there remained no fruits but the little district of Calais, destined to furnish fresh cause of feud, and a heritage of eternal hate towards this country in France. Truly we cannot wonder at the hereditary repugnance of Frenchmen towards the English, were this only grounded on the wars of this and succeeding reigns, in which we marched our armies like destroying demons time after time over the whole country, burning towns and villages, laying waste the country, plundering and murdering, as if the object were not conquest but extermination. With us the name of Dane has come down as a fierce and sanguinary savage—the scourge of our ancestors; to the French the English of these ages must stand in their history in the same characters of savagery and wanton cruelty. As we have said, nothing could be so insane as this wholesale carnage and ruin inflicted on the French and Scotch if conquest were the object. But the ideas so plain and prominent to us do not seem to have entered the conception of men of those times, that to win a land you must win the people, and to win a people you must conciliate them; offering them even greater advantages than they possess under the dynasty you would displace, and releasing them from old oppressions. None of these things revealed themselves to the warriors of those feudal ages. Indeed, the true and sound policy of the Edwards was to annex Scotland, combining the island into one noble kingdom; and to have achieved this they should, of all things, have kept their attention and their resources undivided, and have made the name of England an attraction to their northern brethren, not a horror.

But, so far as Edward III.'s foreign expeditions led abroad his great and factious nobles, they insured a long and settled quiet at home. That quiet, it is true, was not free from oppressions and from great plunderings of the people by the practice of purveyance. Edward ruled with a high hand, and kept both his nobles and people in subjection; but the exactions of the crown were, at their worst, far more tolerable than those of a crowd of barons and their vassals, and the horrors which civil dissensions inflicted on the people. With all the drain of men and *barones minores*, or lesser nobility, to the wars, there were constant complaints of robberies, murders, and other outrages committed under protection of the great; but in no degree so extensive as at times when the restless and quarrelsome nobles were all at home. The king, too, driven to straits by the constant want of money for his wars, always made very free in levying taxes without consent of parliament, and in procuring provisions by what was styled purveyance. When the king had no money his family must subsist, and therefore he was obliged to send out his servants as purveyors, who seized provisions wherever they could find them, and gave tallies, or wooden memorandums, of what they took, at what rate they pleased; the price to be obtained as best it might, or stopped in the next taxes.

But for all these things the king was called to account on each fresh application to parliament for supplies. By this means the parliament during his reign acquired a great amount of influence, as it had done under Edward I. from the same cause, and began to feel its power; so that, as we have seen, the king was obliged to renew the Great Charter fifteen times during his reign. So also we see in the last years of his reign the parliament impeached his ministers, and drove lord Neville and lord Latimer from his service. The power of the barons was thus considerably depressed; and at the same time that of the crown was restrained, and by nothing more than by a statute passed in the twenty-fifth year of Edward's reign, limiting the charge of high treason—before very loose and expandable, at the royal pleasure—to three principal heads; namely, conspiring the death of the king, levying war against him, and making alliance with his enemies; and even on these grounds no penalty was to be inflicted without the sanction of parliament.

Trade in this reign was at a low ebb, the natural result of war; yet Edward made efforts to introduce woollen manufactures, having observed their value amongst the Flemings, at the same time that he injured commerce by seizing so many of its ships to convey his troops and stores. Altogether, it was a reign during which, owing to the necessities of the king and the nobles, the people were slowly advancing, and in which they were considerably relieved from the encroachments and exactions of the church by the firm conduct of the king. He passed the statute of previsors, making it penal for bishops or clergy to receive investment from Rome, and menacing with outlawry any

THE DEATH OF EDWARD III. (See page 402.)

who appealed to Rome against judgments passed here. Parliament, encouraged by this, went further, declaring that the pope levied five times more taxes in England than the king; adding, that they would no longer endure it, and even plainly talking of throwing off all papal authority. In fact, in this reign really commenced the Reformation. Altogether, therefore, the reign of Edward III. is as remarkable for the growth of popular power as for that of military fame.

Edward had a large family by his queen Philippa; namely, five sons and four daughters, who grew up. Besides the Black Prince and John of Gaunt, so well known to history, there was Lionel, duke of Clarence, the second son, who left one daughter, married to Edmund Mortimer, earl of Marche, the son of the notorious Mortimer of the last reign. He married, as second wife, a daughter of the duke of Milan, and died in Italy. He is said to have greatly resembled his father and the Black Prince in his character. The fourth son was Edmund, earl of Cambridge, afterwards created duke of York by Richard II.; and the fifth was Thomas, earl of Buckingham, also created by Richard II. duke of Gloucester. In this reign the title of duke was first adopted from France.

The daughters of Edward were Isabella, Joan, Mary, and Margaret; of whom Joan died unmarried, though affianced to Alphonso, king of Castile; Mary was married to John de Montfort, duke of Brittany; and Margaret to John Hastings, earl of Pembroke, so conspicuous in the wars of France.

The end of three of the most remarkable characters who figured in France during Edward III.'s campaigns there, two of them his most successful opponents, and one occasionally his ally, ought to be noticed in the history of this reign, though they survived Edward a little, and a very little: for they had all passed away within three years of his decease.

The first was the constable Du Guesclin, who had raised himself from a small beginning to become the most celebrated man of France, and almost of his age. No man of those times, indeed, bore a higher character for valour, ability as a general, probity, and honour. He had the failing of his age, and sometimes gave way to the perpetration of severe deeds; but on the whole he was a fine specimen of the feudal knight. No man rendered more solid services to his country, and he continued labouring for it to the last, and died in arms. He was laying siege to the fortress of Randun, and was so ill, that when the commandant declared that he would only deliver the keys into the hands of Du Guesclin, he sent him word that he must then bring them to him, and make haste, or it would be too late. When the commandant arrived he was dead, and he laid his keys at the feet of the deceased hero, who had departed in the very act of completing the reconquest of the alienated lands of France.

Very different was the end of Charles, king of Navarre, —Charles, emphatically the Bad, the demon and evil genius of France. We have seen something of his wicked career; his conspiracies against the king of France; his alliance with his enemies the English; his continual designs on the crown of France; his pretended democracy and advocacy of a republic. He went still further; and was accused by Charles V. of having given him a dose of poison so strong that it caused him to lose his nails and his hair, and to feel the effects to the day of his death, which it was said to have hastened. He was deprived by the estates of the kingdom of all his possessions in France. Still he retained his kingdom of Navarre; but his continual intrigues against the crown, and his criminal life as a man, had so involved him in difficulties, that he laid on taxes so heavy that at length his subjects declared they could not pay them. To compel them he caused the deputies from the different bodies and towns of Navarre to be enclosed in a high walled garden. Here he tried to reason them into obedience, and that failing, to terrify them into it, he kept them shut up there, with only food and drink enough simply to retain them alive. This not succeeding, he had the heads of three of their leaders struck off, with a promise of a continuation of the process.

But the measure of his crimes was complete. He was now sixty years of age, and a mass of disease, from the viciousness of his habits. To maintain his warmth his physician ordered him to be swathed in linen steeped in spirits of wine, and his bed to be warmed by a pan of hot coals. He had enjoyed the benefit of this singular prescription some time in safety, but now, as he was perpetrating his barbarities on the representatives of his kingdom, "by the pleasure of God, or of the devil," says Froissart, "the fire caught to his sheets, and from that to his person, swathed as it was in matter highly inflammable." He was fearfully burnt, but lingered nearly a fortnight, in the most terrible agonies. Such was the end of this wicked man, as terrible as his life had been mischievous.

Charles V. did not long survive this troubler of his peace, dying in September, 1380, and leaving a very different character, having regained to his country by his wise policy all that his predecessors Philip and John had lost at Crecy and Poictiers.

CHAPTER LXVI.

Reign of Richard II.—His early Education—The Government during his Minority—Invasion of the French—John Phillpot, Alderman of London, captures the Spanish Fleet—The Insurrection of Wat Tyler—Discontent of both People and Aristocracy—Invasion of Scotland—Intrigues of the Duke of Gloucester—Expulsion of the King's Ministers, and Execution of his Favourites—Preaching of Wycliffe—Death of the Queen—Expedition to Ireland.

RICHARD II. was not eleven years of age at the time of his grandfather's death. He was the sole surviving son of the popular Black Prince, his elder brother having died before his father left Guienne. Richard, therefore—called Richard of Bordeaux, from being born there—was brought up as the heir-apparent by his mother, Joan of Kent, and his uncles, in the most luxurious indulgence, and in the most extravagant ideas of his royal rank. This was a fatal commencement for the reign of a boy, and it was made still more so by the extreme popularity of his father, whose memory was idolised both as the most renowned warrior of his time, and, perhaps, of all English history to that period, and as the advocate of the people against the stern measures of Edward III. All these things combined to spoil a naturally good and affectionate disposition.

Richard ascended the throne on the 22nd of June, 1377, his grandfather having died the day before. While the old king still lay on his death-bed, a deputation of the citizens of London had waited on the juvenile prince at Shene, where he was living, and offered him their lives and fortunes.

They entreated him to come and take up his residence in the Tower amongst them. Richard gave a gracious reply in assent, and the next afternoon made his entrance into the capital. Nothing could exceed the enthusiasm with which he was received by the Londoners. They had erected triumphal arches; the conduits ran with wine, and a variety of pageants were displayed. One of these is thus described by Walsingham:—In Cheapside was erected a building in the form of a castle, out of which ran two streams of wine. On its four turrets stood four girls dressed in white, and of about the age of the king. As he approached they blew towards him small shreds of gold leaf, a favourite fancy at the time, repeated afterwards to the young queen, on her arrival from Germany. They showered upon him flowers made of gilt paper, and then coming down, filled cups with wine from the fountain, and presented them to him and his attendants. Then flew down an angel from the summit of the castle and offered to the king a gold crown. Every street exhibited some pageant or device, but the merchants of Cheapside obtained the palm for their superior ingenuity.

The great seal was delivered to the king; but as the bishop of Ely, the chancellor, was absent beyond sea on public affairs, Richard returned the seal, enclosed in a purse containing also various letters patent, to Sir Nicholas Bonde, by him to be kept till the chancellor's arrival.

Three weeks were spent in performing the obsequies of the late king, and in preparing for the coronation of the present. This took place on the 16th of July. On that day Richard rose at an early hour, and attended matins and mass in his private chapel in Westminster. The procession assembled in the great hall, the passage from which to the abbey church had been carpeted with scarlet cloth. The prelates, abbots, and clergy led the way, followed by the officers of state, and last came the king, a canopy of sky-blue silk, supported on spears of silver, being borne above him by the barons of the Cinque Ports. While the litany was chanted the young prince lay prostrate before the altar, whence he was conducted to his throne, raised on a platform in the middle of the nave. When he had taken the customary oath, the archbishop, accompanied by the marshals, explained to the people the obligations of his oath, and inquired whether they were willing to have Richard for their king. The reply was a loud and universal acclamation; whereupon he was anointed, crowned, and invested with all the insignia of royalty. To this followed a solemn mass, and at the offertory he descended and presented on the altar bread, wine, and a mark of gold; after which he returned to his throne and received the homage of his royal uncles, his earls and barons.

Sir John Dymoke attended as champion with his two esquires, and the lord steward, the constable, and marshal rode up and down the hall on their chargers to maintain order.

By all this weight of ceremony the poor youth was completely exhausted, and had to be borne in a litter to his own apartment. This to a speculative mind might have presented an omen, too truly realised, that he would not possess vigour to bear him to the end of his natural term of sovereignty. After he was sufficiently restored he again returned to the great hall, where he created four earls and nine knights, and then partook of a sumptuous banquet, which was again followed by a ball, minstrelsy, and the usual boisterous festivities of the age.

Everything, in fact, was done which could tend to inspire the boy-king with an idea of that absolute greatness which had been already sufficiently instilled into his mind from very infancy by his mother, his uncles, and his courtiers. For such things kings afterwards pay a suitable compensation. The same ideas, the same accomplishments, the same spirit of despotism were afterwards imprinted on the nascent mind of Charles I., and with the same results. Never before had such base laudation, such creeping prostrations, been practised in this country. Both courtiers and dignitaries of the church used the same language of grovelling sycophancy towards the unsuspecting youth; and little could he dream that, while they were lauding his wisdom and royal virtues, they were preparing for him the execrations of his people and the loss of his throne and life. It has been justly said, that for much of what came afterwards to pass these vile flatterers were really answerable. While, therefore, passing judgment on the follies and the crimes of kings, we should never forget that they have been made what they are by the mercenary courtiers who perpetually throng about thrones. At this moment the youthful Richard was the idol of every class in the nation; the beauty of his person and the memory of his father surrounding him with a halo of popular favour, through which the gloom of after years could make no way.

The day after the coronation the prelates and barons met in council to arrange the form of government during the king's minority. They avoided appointing a regency, as is supposed, that they might not have to elect the duke of Lancaster, the celebrated John of Gaunt, the king's uncle, who had long been suspected of aspiring to the crown. They, therefore, chose nine councillors, consisting of three bishops, two earls, two baronets, and two knights, to assist the chancellor and the treasurer. Not one of the king's uncles was included, not even the earl of Cambridge, afterwards made duke of York, who was indolent and of slight capacity, and therefore not much to be feared; nor the earl of Buckingham, afterwards duke of Gloucester, who was bold and turbulent, but much more popular than either of his brothers. Contrary to general expectation, Lancaster appeared to acquiesce in the arrangement without a murmur, and retired with all his attendants to his castle of Kenilworth, as if about to devote himself to the pursuits of private life. But he had taken care to secure the appointment of some of his stanch cavaliers in the council, and, in reality, he and his brothers were the real ruling powers in the state. Amongst the leading members of the council were the bishops of London, Carlisle, and Salisbury, the earls of March and Stafford, Sir Richard Devereux, and Sir Hugh Segrave.

The commons had acquired now so much consideration and boldness, that they petitioned the king on this occasion to be admitted to assist the barons in nominating the royal council during the minority, which, though it was not complied with, received a civil answer. They, moreover, represented the necessity of their being summoned every year, as entitled by the law of Edward III., and before they dissolved they appointed two citizens as treasurers to receive and disburse the moneys granted by them to the crown. These treasurers were John Phillpot and William Walworth, citizens of London.

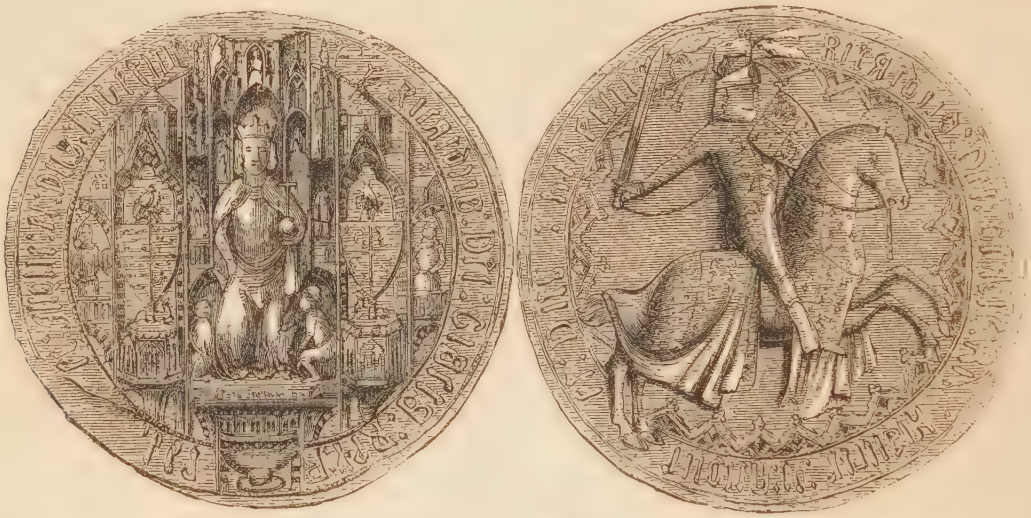
The commons did not conceal their suspicions of the duke of Lancaster. They uttered very plain language regarding him, and this language did not fail to rouse his ire. When the archbishop of Canterbury recommended Richard to the affections of his people, and called on parliament to assist in advising how the enemies of the realm might best be opposed, the commons replied that they could not themselves venture to answer so important a question, but begged to have the aid of twelve peers, naming the duke of Lancaster expressly, as "my lord of Spain."

The moment that the king had assented to this he arose, bent his knee to the king, and said, with much anger, that the commons had no claim to advice from him. They had charged him with nothing short of treason; he, the son of a king, and one of the first lords of the realm; a man of a family not only closely allied to the throne, but noted for its faith and loyalty. That it would be marvellous indeed if he, with more than any other subject in the kingdom to lose, should be found a traitor. He resented the imputation indignantly; called on his accusers to stand forth, and declared that he would meet them like the poorest knight, either in single combat, or any other way that the king might appoint.

This extraordinary demonstration created a great sensation. The lords and prelates crowded round him, entreating him to be pacified, "for no mortal being could give credit to such imputations." The commons pointed to the fact that they had named Lancaster as their principal adviser, and finally the duke allowed himself to be appeased. But it was clear that the commons were very strong against him. The majority consisted of the very men who had been opposed to him in 1376; and their speaker was Sir Peter de la Mare, the man whom he had imprisoned for his activity on that occasion.

Another blow aimed at the aspiring duke was through his patronage of the late king's mistress, the notorious Alice Perrars. Lancaster had procured her return from banishment, and protected her. But he was now fain to abandon her, seeing this stormy state of the political atmosphere; and consented even to sit on a committee of the house, with four other peers, to try her for soliciting causes in the king's courts for hire and reward, and for having procured from the late king the revocation of the appointment of Sir Nicholas Dagworth to an office in Ireland, and a full pardon of Richard Lyons, who had been convicted by the commons of various misdemeanors. The beautiful, clever, and unscrupulous Alice was now finally banished, with forfeiture of all her lands, tenements, goods, and chattels.

The enemies more immediately in view when the parliament was summoned were the French and Spaniards. Taking advantage of the reign of a minor, the French refused to renew the truce which had expired before the death of the late king; they drew close their alliance with Enrique de Transtamara, who resented the assumption of the title of king of Castile by the duke of Lancaster. They united their fleets and ravaged the English coasts.



Great Seal of Richard II.

Richard only ascended the throne in June, and in August the whole of the Isle of Wight was in the possession of these foreigners, with the exception of Carisbrook castle. They laid waste the island, burnt the towns of Hastings and Rye, and attacked Southampton and Winchelsea. Winchelsea made a successful resistance, and the earl of Arundel, falling on the combined fleet before Southampton, repulsed it with great loss. But marauders of other nations flocked to the fleets of the French and Spaniards, and committed great devastation both on our ships at sea and on our coasts. The maritime districts of Kent and Sussex suffered severely, and a fleet even ascended the Thames and burnt the greater part of Gravesend.

To check these several inroads parliament granted supplies, which, however, from the empty condition of the treasury, were obliged to be borrowed in advance from the merchants. With these funds a fleet was raised and put under the command of the duke of Lancaster, who passed over to Brittany, besieged the town of St. Malo, where he lay for some weeks, and then returned to England without effecting anything, to the grievous disappointment of the

people. Meantime the Scots, instigated by the French, broke the truce, and attacked the castle of Berwick, which they took. They burned Roxburgh, and made incursions into the northern counties. Being repulsed, and Berwick retaken by the earl of Northumberland, they united with the French and Spaniards at sea, and under one John Mercer they swept the German Ocean, and seized all the ships in the port of Scarborough.

These tidings produced great alarm and indignation in London, and John Philipot, the stout alderman lately appointed one of the treasurers for the commons, seeing that nothing was done by the government effectually to check these marauders, fitted out a small fleet at his own expense, put to sea without waiting for any commission from the authorities, and coming up with the united fleet, gave battle, and after a desperate conflict succeeded in capturing sixteen Spanish ships, with all the vessels carried off from Scarborough, and John Mercer himself. Returning triumphantly to London after this most brilliant achievement, he was received, as he deserved, with enthusiastic acclamation by his fellow-citizens, but was severely reprimanded by the royal council for having dared to make war without regal permission. So offensive was it to the routine of that day that a man without orders should save his country.

Nothing having been done by the regularly appointed commanders except the usual feat of spending the money, a new parliament was summoned. This met at Gloucester on the 20th of October, 1378. The commons objected to a new subsidy, as well they might, seeing that it had produced no advantage; but being answered by Sir Richard Scrope, the steward of the household, that it was indispensable, they insisted on permission to examine the accounts of the treasurers, which was granted under protest that it was not by right but by favour, and should not be drawn into a precedent. They next requested to be furnished with a copy of the enrolment of the tenths and fifteenths which they had last granted, to learn how they had been raised, which, as money was wanted, was also conceded under protest. Finally, they proposed that six peers and prelates should come to their chamber to consult with them on these matters; an evidence that the lords and commons now regularly occupied separate houses. This was declined by the great men of the upper house, but who professed their readiness to meet, by committee, with a committee of the commons.

The commons having obtained the necessary accounts and documents, went leisurely and deliberately to work; and though the impatient government repeatedly urged them to despatch, they still proceeded with all sedateness and care, showing that the popular body was growing sensible of its real powers. Having discovered that the whole of the supplies had been duly but abortively spent, they granted a fresh impost on wool, wool-fels, and skins, for the pressing services of the state.

Another army was raised and placed under the command of the earl of Buckingham. He passed over to Calais, whence in the summer of 1380 he marched, with two thousand cavalry and eight thousand infantry, through the very heart of France, pursuing the old accustomed ravages, through Picardy, Champagne, the Brie, the Beausse, the Gatinois, the Orleanois, and on to Brittany. The duke of Burgundy, with a far greater army, hovered in the vicinity of this handful of men, but remembering the past result of conflict with small armies of the English he kept aloof.

By the time that Buckingham reached Brittany, Charles V. died, and Charles the VI., a minor like the king of England, succeeded in the autumn of that year. The Bretons, now thinking that a mere boy being on the throne of France they could protect themselves, grew impatient of the burdensome presence of the English. De Montfort, who had received much kindness and refuge in England, was averse to treat with ingratitude his old allies; but the people accused the English of rapacity and haughtiness, and no doubt with cause enough, if we are to judge by the general proceedings of the English in France, and would not cease their demands till the count had transferred his alliance to the regency which governed France during the minority. This accomplished, the people expressed every impatience to be rid of Buckingham and his army, and as soon as the following spring allowed of his embarking he took his leave, having only escaped the hostility of the natives by the bravery of his troops and the supplies of provisions from home. The English returned home denouncing bitterly the ingratitude of the Bretons; and this was the unsatisfactory termination of the long and expensive exertions to maintain the independence of Brittany. The only possession which we retained in that province was the port of Brest, which Richard had received from De Montfort in exchange for an equivalent estate in England. Calais and Cherbourg, obtained from the king of Navarre, Bordeaux, and Bayonne were still towns in the hands of the English, affording tempting avenues in every quarter into France, and incitements to future expeditions.

But at this moment events were approaching which demanded all the efforts of the government to maintain domestic order. In various countries of Europe the advance of society, and, though slow, of trade and manufactures, had begun to produce its certain effect upon the people. They no sooner ate of the tree of knowledge than they perceived that they were naked,—naked of liberty, and property, and every solid comfort. They were in a great measure serfs and bondsmen, transmitted with the estates from proprietor to proprietor, like the chattels and the live stock. The haughty aristocracy looked upon them as little better than the beasts; and addicted to continual wars with each other or with foreign countries, made use of the miserable people only as soldiers for those wars, or as slaves to cultivate their lands. The wretched sufferers were ground by domestic exactions, and pillaged and burnt out continually in some of the countries by invading armies. Nothing could be more terrible than their condition; and when they began to perceive all its horrors, and to endeavour to rise above them, their imperious masters trod them down again with harsh and often terrible ferocity.

But wherever towns grew and trade sprang up, there numbers became by one means or other free. In England every man who could contrive to live a year and a day in any town became a free man. The very wars which had desolated Europe had tended to awaken a spirit of independence; the soldiers who served in different countries picked up intelligence by comparing various conditions of men. The constant demands of government for money inspired those who had to furnish it with a sense of their

own importance. The example of the freedom and superior comfort in towns stimulated the inhabitants of the country to grasp at equal benefits.

Flanders, as the earliest manufacturing and trading country, had, as we have seen, speedily become democratic; had expelled its ruler, and had now maintained a long career of independence. At this moment it was waging a most bloody and determined war, not only against its own earl, but against the whole forces of Burgundy and France, led by Philip van Artavelde, the son of Jacob

It has been supposed that the preaching of Wycliffe had no little effect in rousing this storm in England, and there can be no doubt of it. The people, once made acquainted with the doctrines of human right, justice, and liberty abounding in the Bible, and pervading it as its very essence, could only regard the knowledge as a direct call from God to rise, rend the bondage of their cruel slavery, and assume the rank of men. This light, this wonderful knowledge, coming too suddenly upon them, made them, as it were, intoxicated, and overthrew all restraint and tranquillity of

Richard II. From the Original Painting in the Jerusalem Chamber of the Deanery, Westminster.

the stout old brewer of Ghent, and by a relentless citizen, Peter Dubois.

Once more in France insurrection had broken out, headed by the burghers and people of the towns, excited against the tax-gatherers, and had spread from Rouen to Paris, where it was raging. And now the same convulsion, originating in the same causes, had reached England; and simultaneously in Flanders, France, and this country the people were in arms against their government and nobles.

mind. They felt their wrongs the more acutely by perceiving their rights, and how basely they had been deprived of them by men professing this religion of truth, justice, and humanity. Such was the case on the preaching of Luther in Germany afterwards, and it was the case here now. Occasionally a nobleman had suddenly emancipated the whole of the villeins on his domain in return for a fixed rent to be paid by them. But this process was slow and uncertain, and extremely exciting to those who witnessed this emancipation, remaining themselves in bondage.

THE WIDOW OF THE BLACK PRINCE APPEALING TO WAT TYLER FOR PROTECTION FROM THE MOB. (See page 411.)

Thus all classes of the people were in a restless state. The freemen just above these serfs, and especially those on the coast, who had been plundered and burnt out by the enemy, were full of bitterness from their sufferings, and disposed to regard the tax-gatherer as little short of a demon. Few, except the working order of the clergy, who lived and laboured amongst them, treated them like human beings.

Imagine, then, this state of things, and a priest like John Ball of Kent coming amongst them on Sundays as they issued out of church in the villages, and saying to them, as Froissart thus reports him: "Ah, ye good people, matters go not well to pass in England, nor shall do, till everything be common, and that there be no villeins nor gentlemen, but that we be all united together, and that the lords be no greater masters than we. What have we deserved, or why should we be kept thus in bondage? We all come from one father and mother, Adam and Eve. Whereby can they show that they are greater lords than we be? saving by that they cause us to win and labour for that they dispend. They are clothed in velvet and camlet, furred with ermine, and we are vestured with poor cloth. They have their wines, spices, and good bread, and we have the drawing out of the chaff, and drink water. They dwell in fair houses, and we have the pain and travel, rain and wind in the fields; and by that which cometh of our labours they keep and maintain their estates. We be called their bondmen, and without we do willingly their service we be beaten; and we have no sovereign to whom we can complain, nor that will hear us, nor do us right. Let us go to the king, he is young, and show him what bondage we be in, and show him how we will have it otherwise, or else we will provide us of some remedy; and if we go together, all manner of people who be now in any bondage will follow us, to the intent to be made free; and when the king seeth us we shall have some remedy, either by fairness or otherwise."

This honest John Ball, having got this great gospel of freedom into his head, could not be prevailed on to be quiet. The archbishop shut him up for some months in prison, but on coming out he went about saying the very same things. And these people, says Froissart, "of whom there be mo in England than in any other realm, loved John Ball, and said that he said truth." "They woulde murmur one with another in the fieldes, and in the wayes as they went togyder, affermyng how Johan Ball sayd trouthe." In the beginning of the world, they said, there were no bondmen, wherefore they maintained none ought to be bound, without he did treason to his lord as Lucifer did to God. But they said they could have no such battle, because "they were nother angelles nor spirittes," but men formed in the similitudes of their lords; adding, Why, then, should we be kept under so like beasts? And they declared they would no longer suffer it; they would be all one, and if they laboured for their lords, they would have wages for it.

This was all only too true; but a truth coming too suddenly, and more than they could bear, or were disciplined to win, or, if won all at once, to maintain. And these poor people did not know that even now there was growing up that power amongst the people, in the shape of parliament, which should gradually and securely fight their battles, and establish all their desires. Even now the commons had reached the presence of the king and the nobles, and stood there boldly declaring their rights, and putting an ever-growing restraint on regal and aristocratic license.

In the parliament which met in January, 1380, the commons complained loudly of the extravagance of the expenditure. They demanded that the king's council should be dismissed; that the king should govern only by the aid of the usual crown officers, the chancellor, treasurer, privy seal, chamberlain, and steward of the household; and that these ministers should be chosen by parliament. These unexampled demands were all granted; a committee of finance was appointed, to consist of lords and commons; and such a concession as had never yet been made was granted, and three representatives of cities, two aldermen of London and one of York, were put upon it. In the autumn, being informed that the subsidies which they voted were inadequate to defray the debts of the state, they pronounced the demand "outrageous and insupportable." This was bold language; the result was, of the many schemes to meet the difficulty, the fatal capitation tax, which threw the country into a general convulsion.

This was a tax of three groats per head on every male and female above fifteen years of age. In towns it was to be regulated by the rank and ability of the inhabitants, in order to render it easier to the poor, so that no person should pay less than one groat, nor more than sixty, for himself and wife.

This poll tax was the drop to the full cup. The people were already writhing under the continued exactions for the French wars, and this tax drove them to desperation. What added gall to its bitterness was that it was farmed out to some of the courtiers, who again farmed it out to foreign merchants, whose collectors proceeded with a degree of harshness and insolence which irritated the people beyond endurance. It was soon discovered that the amounts which came into the treasury would by no means reach the sum calculated upon. Commissions were then issued to inquire into the conduct of the collectors, and to enforce payment in cases where favour had been shown, or where due payment had not been made.

The people soon grew obstinate, and declared boldly they would not pay. Hereupon the commissioners treated them very severely, and they again, on their part, resenting this severity, began secretly to combine for resistance, and proceeded to chase away, wound, or even kill the officers of the law.

One of these commissioners, Thomas de Bampton, sat at Brentwood in Essex, and summoned the people of Fobbings before him. They declared that they would not pay a penny more than they had done. Bampton then menaced them, and ordered his sergeants-at-arms to arrest them. But they drove him and his men away. Whereupon Sir Robert Bealknap, the chief justice of the common pleas, was sent into Essex to try the recusants; but they denounced him as a traitor to the king and country, made him glad to get away, and cut off the heads of the jurors and clerks of the commission, which they stuck upon poles, and carried through all the neighbouring towns and villages, calling on the people to rise. In a few days the commons of Essex were in a general insurrection, and had found a leader in a vagabond priest who called himself Jack Straw.

They attacked the house of Sir Robert Hales, the lord treasurer of England, who was also prior of the Knights of

St. John of Jerusalem. Ample provision had just been made for a chapter-general of the order, and there was in the house abundance of meats, wines, clothes, and other things for the knights brethren. The people ate up the provisions, drank the wine, and destroyed the house.

They then sent letters and messengers into all the neighbouring counties, and not only the peasantry of Kent, but of Norfolk and Suffolk, were soon up in arms. But the incident which caused the whole immediately to break into flame was this:—One of the collectors of the tax at Dartford, in Kent, went to the house of one Wat Tyler, or Walter the Tyler, who, Froissart says, was "indeed a tyler of houses, an ungracious patron." He demanded the tax for a daughter of Wat, whom the mother contended was under fifteen, the age fixed by the law. The insolent tax-gatherer declared he would prove that, and was proceeding to the grossest outrage, when Wat came running in at the outcries of the wife and daughter, and knocked out the scoundrel's brains with his hammer. The neighbours applauded Wat's spirit, and vowed to stand by him; "for," says the chronicler, "the rude officers had in many places made the like trial."

The news of this exciting occurrence, and the insurrection of the men of Kent, spread rapidly over the whole country, from the Thames to the Humber; through Hertford, Surrey, Sussex, Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambridge, and Lincoln. In every place they chose some leader, whose assumed names still remain in their letters and proclamations, as Jakke Milner, Jak Carter, Jak Treweman, and Jon Balle. They were invited by the letters from Kent to march to London, where "the commons should be of one mind, and should do so much to the king that there should not be one bondman in all England." They are reported soon to have mustered sixty thousand from the counties round London, making free with houses and provisions as they marched along.

But the great stream appears to have come from Kent and the south. One of their first visits was to Sir Simon Burley, the guardian of the king, at Gravesend. Sir Simon had claimed a man living in that town as his bondman, in spite of the legal plea set up that he had resided there more than a year and a day. He demanded three hundred pounds of silver for the man's freedom; but this was refused, and Sir Simon sent his prisoner to Rochester castle. The men of Kent, now joined by a strong body from Essex, marched on Rochester, took the castle by surprise, and not only liberated this man, but other prisoners.

At Maidstone Wat Tyler was elected captain of the insurgent host, and the democratic preacher John Ball as its chaplain, who took for the text of his first sermon the good old rhyme—

> "When Adam delved, and Eve span,
> Who was then the gentleman?"

Wat Tyler and his host entered Canterbury on the Monday after Trinity Sunday, 1381, where John Ball denounced death to the archbishop, who had often imprisoned him, who, however, luckily was absent. But they broke open the archbishop's house; and, as they carried out the wealthy pillage, they said, "Ah! this chancellor of England hath had a good market to get together all this riches. He shall now give an account of the revenues of England, and the great profits he hath gathered since the king's coronation."

They struck terror into the monks and clergy of the cathedral; did much damage to it and the church of St. Vincent, as is said; compelled the mayor and aldermen to swear fidelity to king Richard and the commons of England; cut off the heads of three wealthy men of the city; and, followed by five hundred of the poor inhabitants, advanced towards London. By the time they reached Blackheath, joined by the streaming thousands from all quarters, the insurgents are said to have amounted to one hundred thousand men.

Into the midst of this strange, rude, and tumultuous host, suddenly, to her astonishment and terror, came the king's mother, on her return from a pilgrimage to Canterbury. "She was," says Froissart, "in great jeopardy to have been lost, for the people came to her chaise and did rudely use her, whereof the good lady was in great dread lest they should have dealt rudely with her damsels. Howbeit, God kept her," and being excused with a few kisses, and with offers of protection, she got to London as fast as she could, and to her son in the Tower, with whom there were the earl of Salisbury, the archbishop of Canterbury, the earl of Hereford, Sir Robert of Namur, and other noblemen and gentlemen.

At Blackheath John Ball frequently addressed the assembled multitudes on his old and favourite topics of the rights and equality of men. We must bear in mind that this man and his doctrines have been described by his enemies. He appears to have been a thorough democrat or chartist of his day, drawing his opinions from the literal declarations of the gospel that God is no respecter of persons; and, addressing these new and startling ideas to the inflamed minds of ignorant and oppressed people, they immediately applied them in their own way, and not only declared that they would have no more lords, barons, and archbishops, but simply the king and the commons of England. They are said to have committed great atrocities on their way from different counties, pillaging the manors of their lords, demolishing the towns, and burning the court rolls. They swore to be true to the king, and to have no king of the name of John, this being aimed at John of Gaunt, their standing aversion, and who was regarded as the author of this tax, because he exercised authority over his nephew. They also swore to oppose all taxes but fifteenths, the ancient tallage paid by their fathers.

That many outrages were committed is most probable: such must be inevitable from so general a rising of an uneducated and oppressed populace smarting under generations of wrongs. But we shall most fairly judge them by their own public demands presented to the king, which we shall presently see were most wonderfully simple, reasonable, and enlightened for such a people, under such exasperating circumstances.

The harangues of John Ball are described as working the insurgent army into the wildest excitement, and the admiring people are said to have declared that he should be the primate and chancellor of England, this officer at that time being almost always a prelate.

At the taking of the castle of Rochester the mob had compelled the governor, Sir John Newton, to go along with them; and now they sent him up the river in a boat to go to the king at the Tower as their messenger. He was to

inform the king of all that they had done or meant to do for his honour; to say that his kingdom had for a long time been ill-governed by his uncles and the clergy, especially by the archbishop of Canterbury, his chancellor, from whom they would have an account of his administration of the revenue.

Sir John, coming to the Tower, was received by Richard graciously; and he then told the people's desire, assuring the king that all he said was true, and that he dared do no other than bring the message, for they had his children as hostages, and would kill them if he did not return. With the king were his mother, the archbishop, Sir John Holland, the earls of Warwick, Berwick, and Salisbury, the grand prior of the Knights of St. John, and many others who had flocked thither for safety. The king's brothers, the dukes of Lancaster, York, and Gloucester, were absent, the unpopular Lancaster being in Scotland.

After some consultation the king informed Sir John that in the morning he would come and speak to the people. With this message Sir John joyfully departed, and the vast crowd are said to have received the message of the king's coming with great satisfaction.

The next morning, being the 12th of June, the king, attended by a considerable number of the lords of the court, descended the river in his barge. At Rotherhithe he found ten thousand men on the river banks awaiting his coming, with two banners of St. George and sixty pennons. So soon as they saw the king they set up one universal cheer. This was no doubt meant as a hearty welcome; but the king and his courtiers being all in a state of panic—for the council, it is stated, were perfectly paralysed by their fears—the boisterous acclamation struck the royal party as frightful yells. "The people," says Froissart, "made such a shout and cry as if all the devils in hell had been among them." No doubt the terrors of the democrats of Flanders, now again in full action, of the horrible Jacquerie and the ruthless Malleteers, at this time paralysing Paris, were all present to the minds of the royal party, and, with the uncouth appearance of the mob, operated awfully upon them. Instead of landing, the courtiers advised the king to draw off. The people cried to the king that, if he would come on shore, they would show him what they wanted; but the earl of Salisbury replied, saying, "Sirs, ye be not in such order or array that the king ought to speak to you;" and with that the royal barge bore away up the river again.

At this sight the crowd were filled with indignation. They had hoped that now they should bring to the royal ear all their grievances; and there can be little doubt that if the king had shown the spirit which he afterwards did, and boldly and courteously put his barge within good hearing, and listened to and answered their complaints, all that followed might have been prevented. But being now persuaded that the great lords about him would not allow the king to hold fair and open audience with them, "they returned," says Froissart, "to the hill where the main body lay"—for this was only a deputation, the hill being most likely Greenwich Park—and there informed the multitude what had taken place.

On hearing this the enraged host cried out with one voice, "Let us go to London!" "And so," continues Froissart, "they took their way thither; and on their going they beat down abbeys and houses of advocates and men of the court, and so came into the suburbs of London, which were great and fair, and beat down divers fair houses, and especially the king's prisons, as the Marshalsea and others, and delivered out the prisoners that were therein." They broke into the palace of the archbishop at Lambeth, regarding him as the great enemy of the nation, and burnt the furniture and the records belonging to the chancery.

As the men of Kent advanced through Southwark the men of Essex advanced along the left bank of the river, destroyed the house of the lord treasurer at Highbury, and menaced the north of London.

When the men of Kent arrived at London-bridge they found it closed against them, and they declared that if they were not admitted they would burn all the suburbs, and, taking London by force, would put every one to death. The people within said, "Why do we not let these good people in? What they do they do for us all!" and thereupon they let down the centre of the bridge, which Walworth, the mayor, had had drawn up. "Then these people entered into the city, and went into houses, and sat down to eat and drink; they desired nothing, but it was incontinently brought to them, for every man was ready to make them good cheer, and to give them meat and drink to please them. Then the captains, as John Ball, Jack Straw, and Wat Tyler, went throughout London, and twenty thousand men with them, and so came to the Savoy in the way to Westminster, which was a goodly house, which appertained to the duke of Lancaster; and when they entered they slew the keepers thereof, and robbed and pillaged the house, and then set fire to it, and clean burnt and destroyed it."

This palace of John of Gaunt's was the most magnificent house in London. The mob having thus shown their hatred of him, went to the house of the Knights Hospitallers in Clerkenwell, which had been lately built by Sir Robert Hales, the grand prior and treasurer of the kingdom, whose house they destroyed at Highbury. In destroying these noble houses the people disclaimed any idea of plunder. Their objects were, as they asserted, to punish the great traitors to the nation, and obtain their freedom from bondage. They published a proclamation forbidding any one to secrete any booty. They hammered out the plate, and cut it into small pieces: they beat the precious stones to powder, and, one of the rioters having concealed in his bosom a silver cup, was thrown with his prize into the river.

But they were not so abstinent of the wine which they found in the cellars. With this, to them, new and delicious liquor, they grew intoxicated and furious, and proceeded to the most bloody tragedies. To every one whom they met they put the question, "With whom holdest thou?" and unless he said, "With king Richard and the commons," off went his head. The Fleet prison and Newgate were destroyed, the liberated prisoners labouring heartily at the demolition. The Temple, with all its books and ancient works, was burnt. All foreigners they destroyed with the constant antipathy of the uneducated; but against the Lombards and the Flemings, as money dealers and contractors with government, their rage was deadly. They dragged thirty Flemings out of the churches whither they had fled for sanctuary, and thirty-two more out of the Vintry, and despatched them. Having left more than thirty of their number buried in their intoxication under the smoking ruins of the Savoy, and massacred many eminent

citizens as they endeavoured to escape, wearied out with drink and slaughter, at night they sat down before the Tower.

In the morning the sight from the Tower was by no means cheering. The immense multitude was clamouring for the heads of the chancellor and treasurer, whom they regarded as main authors of all the exactions and ill-treatment they had received, and excluding the entrance of all provisions till their demand was conceded. Presently a message was brought them from the king that if they would quietly retire to Mile End, then having plenty of open land, "where the people of the city did disport themselves in the summer season," he would meet them there and listen to their requests. Anon the gates were thrown open, the drawbridge lowered, and Richard, attended by a few unarmed followers, rode on amid the throng. Arriving at Mile End he found himself surrounded by sixty thousand petitioners. On the way Richard's half brothers, the earl of Kent and Sir John Holland, had taken alarm and ridden off, leaving this youth of sixteen in a cowardly manner in such circumstances. But Richard on this occasion displayed a bravery and a discretion which, had they been uniformly exhibited, must have produced a prosperous reign.

According to Froissart, in the night, while they lay asleep on Tower Hill, the king had been advised by Sir William Walworth and others to make a sally and slay them in their sleep; for, as he observes, there were not one in twenty in harness, and as they were drunken, they might be killed like so many flies. These counsellors represented that the citizens of London could easily do this, as they had their friends ready in arms secreted in their houses, and that there were Sir Robert Knowles and Sir Perdiccas d'Albret, the famous Free Companion captains, with eight thousand more that might be mentioned. But the earl of Salisbury and "the wise men about the king gave better and more humane advice." And now that the king spoke face to face with them, behold, all their demands resolved them into these four:—1. The abolition of bondage. 2. The reduction of the rent of land to fourpence the acre. 3. The free liberty of buying and selling in all fairs and markets. 4. A general pardon for the past offences.

The king with a smiling countenance assured them that all this was fully granted them, and that if they would retire every one to his own county and place, he would give one of his banners to those of each shire, bailiwick, and parish to march home under; and that they should leave two or three from each village to bring unto them copies of the charter he would give them. On hearing this the people said, "We desire no more." They became quite appeased, and began to draw off towards London. That night thirty clerks were employed in making copies of this charter, which were sealed and delivered in the morning.

But while the superior and better-disposed country people had attended the king, Wat Tyler and Jack Straw, with the more turbulent and factious portion of the insurgents, had remained behind. No sooner was the king out of sight, than these treacherous fellows made a rush at the Tower, and got possession of it, most probably through the perfidy or perhaps panic of the garrison, for there were in the Tower, according to Holinshed, six hundred men-at-arms, and as many archers, while of these commons and husbandmen many were only provided with sticks, and not one in a thousand properly armed. Here the insurgents got possession, as no doubt was their grand object, of their designed victims, the archbishop of Canterbury, the chancellor; and Sir Robert Hales, the treasurer; of William Appledore, the king's confessor; and Legge, one of the farmers of the obnoxious tax, with three of his accomplices. All these they speedily beheaded. The head of the archbishop was carried through the city on the point of a lance, with the hat he wore nailed to the skull, that he might be better known to the multitude, and it was set on London Bridge.

They ranged through all the apartments of the Tower, again came upon the terrified mother of the king, pricked her bed with their swords to see if any one was concealed in it, and saluted her with a few more kisses. The poor lady fainted away, and was carried by her attendants to her house, called "The Wardrobe in Carter Lane." Here the king on his return joined her, and gave her comfort, trusting that all would soon now be over.

In the morning Richard left the Wardrobe, and, after mass at Westminster, rode through Smithfield at the head of sixty horsemen, where he beheld a great throng of people in front of the abbey of St. Bartholomew. He said he would go no further till he knew what ailed them, and that he would appease them again. It was Wat Tyler at the head of twenty thousand insurgents. Wat had refused the charter sent to him, demanding fresh conditions; and, when these were conceded in a second, demanded still more; amongst other things, the total repeal of the forest or game laws, and that all parks, waters, warrens, and woods should be common, so that the poor as well as the rich should freely fish in all waters, hunt the deer in the parks and forests and the hare in the fields.

On seeing the king stop Wat Tyler said: "Sirs, yonder is the king; I will go and speak with him. Stir not hence without I make you a sign; and when I make you a sign, come on and slay them all except the king. He is young; we can do with him as we please, and we will lead him with us all about England, and so we shall be lords of all the realm without doubt." Wat rode up to the king, and so near that the head of his horse touched the flanks of that of the king. Then said Wat, "Sir king, seest thou all yonder people?" "Yea, truly," said the king; "why dost thou ask?" "Because," said Wat Tyler, "they be all at my commandment, and have sworn to me faith and truth to do all that I will have them. And thinkest thou that they, and as many more in London, will depart without thy letters?"

The king courteously assured him they should have them; and at this point, says Froissart, Wat Tyler cast his eyes on an esquire of the king, whom he hated on account of some words he had said. "Ah!" said he, "art thou there? Give me thy dagger." The esquire refused, but the king bade him give it, and with that Wat began to play with it, and said to the esquire, "By my faith I will never eat meat till I have thy head." At this moment the mayor, Sir William Walworth, coming up with his twelve horse, and hearing these words, and looking through the press, said, "Ha! thou knave, darest thou speak such words in the king's presence?" Wat gave a sharp answer, and Froissart says that the king said to Walworth, "Set hands on him." Be that as it may, Walworth thrust a short sword into Tyler's throat; or, as others say, struck him on the head with it or with his mace. At all events, Walworth gave him the first

blow, which was speedily followed by one of the king's squires, one Robert Standish, probably the one with whom the altercation commenced, stabbing him in the abdomen. Tyler wheeled his horse round, rode about a dozen yards, and fell to the ground, where he soon expired.

On seeing him fall his followers cried out, "We are betrayed! They have killed our captain!" and they put themselves in battle array, with their bows before them.

With wonderful presence of mind Richard ordered his attendants to keep back, and, riding confidently up to the people, said, "Sirs, what aileth you? I will be your

John of Gaunt.

leader and captain. Follow me, I am your king; Tyler was but a traitor; be ye at rest and peace." Then he rode back to his company, who advised that they should draw off into the fields near Islington. Thither many followed the king, and many, hoping no good, quietly stole away. On coming into the fields they beheld the renowned Free Companies captain, Sir Robert Knowles, with a thousand men-at-arms; and the insurgents, now fearing the worst, got away as fast as they could, throwing down their bows, and many kneeling to the king and imploring pardon. Knowles burned to be allowed to charge and cut them all down; but the king refused him this indulgence, saying he would take his revenge in another way; which, in truth, he afterwards did. He issued a proclamation, however, forbidding any stranger to remain another night in the city on pain of death.

Such is the history of this remarkable insurrection as transmitted to us with some slight variations by Froissart, Knyghton, Walsingham, Stow, and Holinshed. While these things passed in London various parts of the country were equally agitated and overrun by the insurgents. In the south the outbreak extended as far as Winchester, in the north as far as Beverley and Scarborough. The nobility shut themselves up, and neither stirred out to free themselves nor aid the king. So general and simultaneous was the rising, that some supposed that it was concerted and conducted by some able but invisible leaders much above Wat Tyler or Jack Straw in influence and subtilty. When the mob was at Blackheath there were strange rumours that the king's uncle, the duke of Gloucester, was seen disguised amongst them; but this was probably owing to some one bearing a strong resemblance to the duke being there, or was got up by his enemies to injure him at court,

[WYCLIFF APPEARING BEFORE THE PRELATES AT ST. PAUL'S TO ANSWER THE CHARGE OF HERESY.

as there were active endeavours about the same time to alarm the king regarding Lancaster's intentions, who was on the borders treating with the Scots.

Only one man of distinction acted with the spirit which might have been expected from the warlike baronage of England, and that was a churchman.

Henry Spencer, the young bishop of Norwich, finding that the rebellious peasantry would not listen to what he considered reason, buckled on armour, mounted his steed, and at the head of a strong body of retainers he attacked them in the field as they were pursuing their career of depredation. He repeatedly surprised these marauding bodies, routed, and slew them. His mode of dealing with them was summary and unique. After every battle he sat in judgment on his prisoners, and, after giving them absolution from their sins, had their heads struck off. By these means he soon restored order in the counties of Norfolk, Huntingdon, and Cambridge. When the news of Tyler's overthrow and the dispersion of the insurgents spread through the country, and those who had shut themselves up in castle and town hurried forth to show their deep loyalty to the king, his work had long been done.

Richard himself, having stuck the heads of Wat Tyler and numbers of his compeers on London Bridge, was advised to undertake a progress through the different quarters of his kingdom, to make all quiet and secure. Numbers flocked to his standard, and at the head of forty thousand men he advanced from place to place, issuing proclamations, recalling and destroying the charters he had given, commanding the villeins to return to their labours, and prohibiting, under severe penalties, any illegal assemblies.

In Kent and Essex Richard found some resistance; and it was not until five hundred of these unhappy creatures had been killed in Essex that they gave way. On this occasion Richard is reported to have addressed them in this style:—"Rustics ye have been and are, and in bondage shall ye remain; not such as ye have heretofore known, but in a condition incomparably more vile." This was very different language to that which he had held when he addressed them in force in London; and would show, if it were at all needful, that as a boy of fifteen he could deeply dissimulate; that he never for a moment intended to grant the groaning people any relief; and that he hoarded up his vengeance, as many of his most powerful nobles had to experience, till he saw his opportunity.

And, in keeping with this character, at every town that lay in the neighbourhood of the disturbed districts he opened commissions for the summary condemnation of offenders. According to Holinshed, one thousand five hundred of the insurgents were executed; amongst them Jack Straw, and Lester and Westbroom, who had assumed the title of kings of Norfolk and Suffolk.

When parliament met it was announced to it that the king had revoked all the charters he had been obliged to grant to the villeins; but the chancellor suggested whether it would not be well to abolish the serfdom altogether. This, probably, was the enlightened view of the king's better counsellors; it certainly was not his view of things on his journey; but it met with he response which was inevitable at that day. The barons declared that nothing should induce them to give up the services of their villeins, and that they would resist with all their power either violence or persuasion for that object; nay, were it even to save themselves from one general and inevitable massacre. It was plain the day for the extinction of serfdom was not yet come.

The commons, indeed, attributed the insurrection to its true causes,—to the long-continued exactions occasioned by the wars of the late reigns, which had impoverished the landowners, and deteriorated the condition of the villeins. These expenses, which had produced no advantage to the nation, had made the mass of the people wretched. The rapacity of the officers employed to collect these aids, and of the purveyors, who were but a species of licensed banditti, was unbounded. Besides, there were bands of real banditti, called maintainers, who in various parts of the country subsisted by robbery. These ruffians, such was the inefficient preservation of public order in the country, assembled in great bands, seized people, and especially women, for their ransoms, and killed such persons as attempted to resist. They abounded in Cheshire and Lancashire, made expeditions of a hundred miles or more, and carried off the daughters of men of property, and pretended they had married them; after which they sent to their parents demanding the fortunes to be sent to them on peril of the lives of the abducted victims. But, though the commons pointed out these causes of popular discontent, and obtained an inquiry into the matter, with some reforms in the courts of law and the king's household, they were as far from thinking of the emancipation of the serfs as the lords. They made the danger of again raising them a plea for not yielding the king fresh taxes, but they were after much reluctance compelled to grant them. This being done, Richard proclaimed a general pardon, which eventually extended to the peasantry.

The king was now sixteen, and at this early age he was married to Anne of Bohemia, who herself was only fifteen. She was the daughter of the late emperor of Germany, Charles IV., called Charles of Luxembourg at the battle of Poictiers, where he attended his father, the old blind king of Bohemia. Anne was thus granddaughter to the brave old blind monarch, and sister to the emperor Sigismund. As has almost universally been the case with German princesses, there was a great boast and parade of the illustrious ancestry of Anne, but no money whatever. Nay, Richard, or rather the country, had to pay the expenses of her journey to England, though it was made from the palace of one royal relative to that of another, particularly the dukes of Brabant and Flanders, and under their escort. But, though high pedigreed and portionless, Anne was reckoned handsome, and, far better, was extremely good-hearted and pious. The king became deeply attached to her, and the English were extremely proud of her as the Cæsar's sister, of which they could never speak enough. She only lived twelve years as queen; but she won the affection of every one who came near her, was universally beloved and long lamented under the name of the "Good Queen Anne;" and, had she lived as long as her husband, would undoubtedly have preserved him from alienating the love of his people, and perishing as he did.

On the meeting of parliament, soon after the king's marriage, the duke of Lancaster solicited the grant of £60,000 to enable him to prosecute his claims on the crown of Spain, through the right of his wife, the lady Constance, daughter of Don Pedro the Cruel; but after much

debate the advance was declined. The circumstances of the country rendered it equally unadvisable that a large body of the military men of the realm should be withdrawn from it, and that money should be expended for foreign claims while the people were so sore on the subject of their heavy taxation. The duke was therefore compelled, however unwillingly, to postpone his expedition to Spain. His anxiety at this time was owing to the failure of the earl of Cambridge, who had been sent out to support the king of Portugal against the king of Spain. The earl of Cambridge had carried over a small but brave army to Portugal, the duke of Lancaster promising to follow him with a greater force; but his embassy to Scotland, and the breaking out of the Wat Tyler insurrection had prevented this; and Ferdinand, king of Portugal, finding himself disappointed of the duke's aid, and fearing to be overcome by Spain, had made peace with John of Castile, greatly to the chagrin of the earl of Cambridge, who had made a marriage alliance between his son John and the only daughter of the king of Portugal, both mere children. On this peace being concluded, the earl of Cambridge returned to England, having effected nothing towards the establishment of the claims of his brother, John of Gaunt, but, much in opposition to the king of Portugal, had brought away his son. This led afterwards to the divorce of his son's young Portuguese wife, by dispensation from the pope, and her marriage to the king of Spain. Thus the king of Spain not only maintained himself on the throne of Castile, in defiance of John of Gaunt, but, the king of Portugal dying, he laid claim in right of his wife to that kingdom. These were the circumstances which made Lancaster eager to pass over and assert his claims, but at this juncture without effect. He had only, however, to wait a few years for a more favourable one.

England was at this moment about to undertake the support of the very principles of freedom and popular independence in Flanders which it had so sternly put down at home. Flanders, as the earliest manufacturing and trading country, had, as we have seen, speedily displayed a democratic spirit. It had expelled its ruler, who resisted, and endeavoured to crush all tendency towards popular rights. Though Jacob van Artavelde, the stout brewer of Ghent, had fallen, yet that high-spirited city had maintained a long career of independence. Philip van Artavelde, the son of Jacob, warned by the fate of his father, had, during his youth, kept aloof from popular ambition, and adhered to a strictly private life. But the people of Ghent becoming sorely pressed by the earl of Flanders, and its very existence being at stake, Philip, no longer able to suppress the spirit of the patriot born with him, suddenly emerged from his obscurity and put himself at the head of the populace. The people had assumed a white hat as the badge of their party, and their former leader, John Lyon, was dead, under the suspicion of being poisoned by some emissary of the court party.

Philip van Artavelde put on the white hat, and thus announced to the public that he was willing to tread in the steps of his father, and of their late leader. The most subtle and influential man of this party was one Peter Dubois, who promised Artavelde his whole interest with the people, on certain conditions. "Can you," he said, "bear yourself high, and be cruel amongst the commons, and especially in such things as we shall have to do? A man is nothing unless he be feared and dreaded, and at the same time renowned for cruelty. Thus must the Flemings be governed; and you must have no more regard for the life of man, or pity for their sufferings, than for the life of the brutes which we kill for food."

Philip van Artavelde declared his readiness to adopt this system of action, in order to save his country. He felt, with Peter Dubois, that, to restrain the license of the rude multitude and enable them to win their independence, there must be a strong hand and a stern discipline. That he could assert this he immediately showed, on being elected governor of Ghent, by arresting and cutting off the heads of twelve of the ringleaders of the tumult in which his father was murdered; giving solemn proof that he would not forget his enemies. Presently afterwards he and Peter Dubois put to death with their own hands two ambassadors, whom they had sent to treat with the earl of Flanders, and who had agreed to give up to the earl a hundred of such citizens as he should name, to be entirely at his pleasure, on condition of peace. On these ambassadors declaring these terms, Peter Dubois and Philip Artavelde rose up, and, reproaching them with their treason, stabbed them on the spot, in the midst of the council.

Having thus demonstrated in sanguinary earnest to both friends and foes that they meant to prosecute the contest in the spirit of republican Rome, they took the field. The contest was dreadful, for they had not only to contend with the earl of Flanders, but with the duke of Burgundy, his son-in-law and heir, and the king of France, the nephew of Philip of Burgundy, whom he had induced to come to their aid with a powerful army. Against this formidable confederacy Philip van Artavelde made a most brilliant resistance. He compelled the allied forces to raise the siege of Ghent; he made himself master of Bruges; burnt Sechlin, a town of France; and laid siege to the strong fortress of Oudenarde. Those who fought under him were arrayed in cassocks of different colours, to denote the towns they belonged to. They were armed principally with pikes; all fought on foot, and in one great phalanx. For about fifteen months Artavelde pursued this surprising career of success, but in November, 1382, he came to a great pitched battle with the French at Rosebeque. The night before this battle Artavelde was roused by a sound of a great host fighting on the hill of Dorre, between his camp and that of the French. He went out, had the trumpets blown to call his troops to battle, and being asked by his officers what it meant, he told them; on which they replied that they had heard the same sounds, and the battle-cries of the French in the conflict—St. Denis and Mountjoy! with lights in the sky; but they had sent thither, and found nothing. The next day the battle was fought on this hill, and Philip was slain, with nine thousand of his followers.

This great overthrow, it was supposed, would completely prostrate the Flemings; but the king of France, a boy now only of fourteen years of age, was obliged to hurry home to suppress the insurrection of his own people in Rouen and Paris, who, like the Flemish and English, had risen in resistance to the tax-gatherers and oppressors. The Parisians, thirty thousand in number, had armed themselves with iron mallets, whence they were called Maillotins, or Malleteers. With these mallets they smashed the helmets of the soldiers sent against them, and made them-

selves unassailable by digging ditches, building walls, and barricading the streets; a practice in which they have been followed by their descendants in our time.

The Flemings, relieved from the presence of the French, recovered themselves, and still made a desperate resistance. At this time there were two popes—Clement VII., a Frenchman, and Urban VI., an Italian. We have seen that on all occasions when there was only one pope, he was a zealous peace-maker; but this schism, with its two rival pontiffs, naturally produced a fiery feud. The French pope, Clement, was recognised by France and its allies, Scotland, Spain, Sicily, and Cyprus. Urban was supported by England, the people of Flanders, and the rest of Europe. The two pontiffs launched their anathemas against each other, and roused all their allies to assist their respective causes. France exerting itself powerfully to give the ascendency to Clement, Urban entreated the aid of England. The prominence which the bishop of Norwich had assumed in the Wat Tyler insurrection, and his prompt energy and success as a general, drew the attention of Urban, and he sent to the martial bishop extraordinary powers as his champion. The king and parliament gave their consent; a fifteenth lately granted by the commons was made over to the prelate for the purposes of the enterprise, and he engaged to serve against France for a year, with two thousand five hundred men-at-arms, and the same number of archers.

Philip Artavelde, in his great need, had solicited the assistance of England; but his ambassadors had most impoliticly demanded at the same time the payment of a debt which they alleged was of forty years' standing. The duke of Lancaster and the royal council had made themselves merry over this unique mode of soliciting alliance in a crisis, and refused to help them. But now it was determined to abet the people of Ghent, as a means of upholding them, after their heavy defeat at Rosebeque, against France.

Henry of Norwich passed over the Channel, took Gravelines by assault, pursued the fugitives to Dunkirk, and entered the town in their rear. He was speedily master of the coast as far as Sluys, and might have struck a decisive blow at the French power in Flanders; but he was not supported, though there was a numerous body of men-at-arms at Calais. The duke of Lancaster, whose own offers of leading this expedition had been refused by parliament, and who is said to have seen with chagrin the success of his rival, was accused of preventing the advance of these troops. The bishop, thus thwarted in the midst of his triumphs, turned his arms against Ypres, to oblige the Ghentese; but the siege was prolonged, and the king of France, at the entreaty of the count of Flanders, was approaching with a fine army. The men of Ghent retired; the bishop made one furious assault, and then withdrew. Part of his forces made themselves masters of Bourbourg, and obtained permission to carry their booty to Calais. The bishop threw himself once more into Gravelines, and, after holding it a short time, demolished its fortifications, and returned to England.

That this campaign of the militant bishop did not equal the expectations which his former demonstration had raised, appears partly owing to his own precipitancy, but far more to the machinations of his powerful enemies. Like most unsuccessful commanders, he fell under the censure of the government. He was accused before parliament of having taken a bribe of eighteen thousand francs to betray the expedition, and of having broken his contract with the king by returning before the year of his engagement had expired. Of the former charge he was cleared on full inquiry, but he was condemned on the latter to forfeit all his temporalities till he had paid the full damages to the king. Four of his principal knights were also condemned to pay twenty thousand francs into the treasury for having sold stores and provisions to the enemy to that amount.

Not to interrupt the narrative of events which extend over into other years, we may here note one of the most remarkable incidents of this reign. This is the death of Wycliffe, who was struck with apoplexy while performing public service in his parish church, and died on the last day of the year 1384.

John Wycliffe had not only put in active motion the principles of the Reformation by his preaching, and his public defences against the attacks of the authorities of the church, but he had made those principles permanent by the translation of the Bible. Not that Wycliffe's was the first translation of the Scriptures into English. There appear to have been several versions, and some of them at comparatively early periods. Sir Thomas More, in his "Dialogues," says: "The hole Byble was, long before Wickliffe's days, by vertuous and well-learned men translated into the English tong, and by good and godly people with devotion and solemness well and reverently red." In Strype's "Cranmer" it is also said: "It is not much above one hundred years ago since Scripture hath not been accustomed to be read in the vulgar tongue within this realm; and many hundred years before that it was translated and read in the Saxon's tongue; and when this language waned old and out of common usage, because folk should not lack the fruit of reading it, was translated again into the newer language, whereof yet also many copies may be found."

But these earlier translations of the Bible had remained in the libraries of monasteries, and, by the little education of the people, and the conservative vigilance of the church, had been the sole study of a few learned men. Wycliffe, by his position as theological professor at Oxford, had excited a wide interest and inquiry about the Scriptures; by his patronage at court, and the persecutions of the prelates, they had been made the subject of a vast curiosity, and this curiosity he had taken care to gratify by multiplying copies through the aid of transcribers, and by the poor priests, the converts to his doctrines, reading them and recommending them everywhere amongst their hearers. The English Bible was never more to become a rare or merely curious book. It is said that when the good queen Anne's countrymen who attended her here at the court were expelled by the Lancaster faction, they carried back copies of Wycliffe's Bible and writings, which had been her favourite reading; they thus fell into the hands of Huss and Jerome of Prague, accompanied by the anti-papal doctrines of the great English reformer; and in this manner scattering the first seeds of the reformation in the queen's native country, were destined to prepare the way for Luther, and to produce such immense changes throughout the civilised world.

In England these doctrines and this translation never again ceased to be the object of anxious inquiry. "The new doctrines," says Dr. Lingard, the Catholic historian, "in-

sensibly acquired partisans and protectors in the higher classes, who alone were acquainted with the use of letters; a spirit of inquiry was generated, and the seeds were sown of that religious revolution which in little more than a century astonished and convulsed the nations of Europe."

Wycliffe, who had sown these seeds, survived all the enmity and assailments of the enemies which his attack on the corruptions of the church had naturally created. A fine picture might be painted of Wycliffe on his sick bed when in Oxford, in 1379, he was seized with a dangerous illness. The mendicant friars, whose vices and errors he so severely exposed, crowded round his bed, attended by four aldermen of the city commissioned to visit him, and called upon him to recant his errors. But Wycliffe, who seemed at the point of death, seized with a sudden energy, started up in his bed, and, shaking his clenched hand at these astonished men, exclaimed, "I shall not die, but live many years to expose the absurdities, the falsities, and the crimes of the mendicant friars."

We are not to suppose, however, that Wycliffe had arrived at the clear conceptions of reformed religion which are established at the present day. Neither he nor Luther after him were able to shake off at once all the reverence for the rites and tenets in which they and their fathers for ages had been educated. Any one seeing old Lutheranism as it is yet practised on the Continent would scarcely be able to distinguish it from popery. Socrates, even while about to drink poison as the punishment for his preaching doctrines subversive of the paganism of Greece, yet desired his friends, as soon as he was dead, to sacrifice a cock for him to Esculapius; thus manifesting the hold which his hereditary ideas still had upon him. So Wycliffe and Luther retained many things which subsequent reformers have seen it necessary again to reform. It is doubtful even whether Wycliffe disapproved of either pilgrimages or the worship of images: purgatory he believed in to the last; and, though he denounced the pope as antichrist, and the priests as "the proctors of Satan," in his treatise "On the Truth of Scripture," he asserts that it is worse than paganism to refuse obedience to the apostolic see, and says that "prelates and priests, ordayned of God, comen in the stede of apostles and disciples, and that the pope is the highest vicar that Christ has heare in earth."

These discrepancies demonstrate that this great man was, during his whole career, after he began to perceive the corruptions of the church, in a transition state, not fully cleared and settled in his mind; yet, with all the defects arising from his past trammels, he was a great apostle and did a great work. Numbers of his "poor priests," as they were called, traversed the nation, as he had done, in their frieze gowns and with bare feet, everywhere proclaiming the doctrines of the gospel, and denouncing the impositions and vices of popery. They held up the monks and priests of the time to deserved scorn, and the people, feeling the sacred truth, flocked round them, deserting those who had so long deluded and fleeced them.

There can be little doubt that John Ball, the preacher of Wat Tyler's army, was one of these "poor priests" of Wycliffe, for it was only three years before Wycliffe's death that this insurrection occurred, and Wycliffe's apostles had been preaching everywhere amongst the people for years. There is as little doubt that this preaching produced this insurrection, as Luther's produced the "Peasants' War" afterwards in Germany. The effect was perfectly natural that men, who for ages had been trodden down as slaves and beasts of burden, hearing all at once that "God had made of one blood all the nations of the earth," that He "was no respecter of persons," and that men were called upon by Him to do to one another as they would be done by, should review their position, and stand astonished at its vast antithesis to the ordinances of Christianity. That the people rebelled was not their fault, but that of the barons and the church, which, while professing the gospel, had ignored every precept of it in regard to the people. Now that the great and eternal principles of political justice as well as saving faith contained in the gospel were once known, they never could be again taken away; they became the heritage of the people. The Wat Tyler insurrection was put down, but that which produced it never could be put down any more. The powerful eloquence and holy lives of the preachers of Wycliffe were universally confessed. Men of all ranks, from the royal duke of Lancaster to the peasant, joined them, and acquired the name of Lollards. The inhabitants of London were especially warm adherents of these doctrines. John of Northampton, one of the most opulent and distinguished citizens, was a decided Lollard, and during the time of his being mayor particularly irritated the clergy, who drove a brave trade in pardons and indulgences, by his active reformation of the vices of the people. The lords Hilton, Latimer, Percy, Berkeley, and Clifton, with many other nobles, knights, and eminent citizens, became the protectors and advocates of scriptural reform. Of the growth of this reformation we shall speak further in the chapter on the progress of the nation.

Richard had now reached the age of nineteen. The ability, address, and bravery which he had displayed at the time of the insurrection raised high hopes in the nation of the success of his future government. Time, however, failed to realise these expectations. Richard was by no means destitute of cleverness; but his mind was rather showy than solid. He had been brought up in his boyhood in the south of France, at the luxurious court of Bordeaux. He had early been imbued with the tastes of Provence—music and poetry—rather than stern politics and arms. After his father's death his mother and half-brother had treated him with ruinous personal indulgence, and instilled into his mind the most mischievous ideas of his future greatness and royal authority. There is a very striking parallel between his education, his personal character, and his fate, and those of Charles I. Both were fond of literature and the fine arts; both had the strongest domestic attachments, and had been indoctrinated with the most fatal ideas of the royal prerogative. Both were high-spirited, chivalrous, and, necessarily, despotic; they were moulded to despotism by their parents. Both had their favourites—Richard, De Vere and De la Pole; Charles, Strafford and Buckingham. Both, while they were intensely beloved by their own families and immediate associates, lost the affections of their people by utterly despising their rights; and both came to a tragic end.

Richard was handsome in person, and especially polite to ladies; to his wife he was passionately attached, and she was equally devoted to him. Their domestic life would have been most happy but for the continual jealousies excited between his particular friends and his powerful

and ambitious uncles. Their constant opposition to his favourites exasperated the mind of the king; and these again revenged themselves by exciting in the king's mind suspicions of the ambitious uncles. Lancaster had, some time before this, thought it best for his safety to seek an asylum in Scotland, and would not return till the king, not only by proclamation bore testimony to his innocence, but also allowed him to travel on all occasions with a body-guard.

When the bishop of Norwich returned from his unfortunate expedition, Lancaster concluded an armistice with France, in which the Scots were included; but, as these reckless neighbours still continued the war, he marched into Scotland in 1384, burnt the huts of which their towns were composed, and, to destroy the retreats into which they always retired on the approach of an English army, he supplied his troops, according to Knyghton, with 80,000 axes, with which they cut down their forests, inflicting a most serious injury on the nation. Notwithstanding this service, he found, on his return to London, that the suspicions of his disloyalty were more rife than ever. While the parliament was sitting at Salisbury, a Carmelite friar, one John Latimer, put into the king's hands the written particulars of a real or pretended conspiracy to place the crown on the head of John of Gaunt. Richard was advised to show this to Lancaster, who swore that it was false, and vowed to do battle with any one who impeached his innocence. He insisted that the friar, who persisted in his story, should be committed to safe custody; and, accordingly, he was consigned to the care of Sir John Holland, the king's half brother, but a secret ally of the duke of Lancaster, who strangled him in the night, it is said, with his own hands, and had him dragged through the streets in the morning as a traitor.

This John Holland—a base man, who stained himself with more than one murder, as we shall find—was the son of Joan of Kent, Richard's mother, by her first husband, Sir Thomas Holland; by whom she had also another son, created by Richard earl of Kent. Sir John Holland, notwithstanding Richard, for this second murder, was bent on putting him to death, was afterwards created by him earl of Huntingdon and duke of Exeter. His present act of assassination only the more confirmed the public in the idea that something was to be concealed. There was great excitement; but the lord Zouch, whom the friar had named as the author of the memorial, protested that he knew nothing of the matter; and the earl of Buckingham, another of the king's uncles, bursting into the king's presence with his sword drawn, swore he would kill the first man that dared to charge his brother Lancaster with treason. Richard professed to be satisfied; and, in proof of it, sent the duke across the Channel to procure a prolongation of the armistice. But he was, in reality, anything but satisfied; and it was secretly resolved to arrest him on his return. Apprised of this, the duke, instead of coming to London, hasted away to his castle of Pontefract, where he remained strongly fortified, till, by repeated journeys and entreaties, the king's mother procured a reconciliation, and also a pardon for her son John Holland.

No sooner did the armistice with France and Scotland expire in May, 1385, than the French sent John of Vienne, formerly governor of Calais, to Scotland with an aid of one thousand men-at-arms and four hundred thousand francs in gold, and armour for the equipment of one thousand Scottish knights and esquires, to induce them to make an inroad into England. This armament arrived in Scotland in the early summer, but the French knights, according to Froissart, were greatly astonished at the rudeness of the country and the hard living of the people. According to him, the country was wild, the people barbarous, and Edinburgh, the capital, they thought inferior to their provincial towns of Tournay or Valenciennes. They were annoyed and discontented at the want of feasts, balls, tournaments, and the gaieties of their own country. They complained that they were compelled to purchase the very coarsest food at most exorbitant prices, and were at their wits' end for forage for their horses. The people, exasperated at their ridicule and complaints, repaid them with hatred, and, as they asserted, even laid traps for their lives, the common soldiers being very disrespectful to the women. For a long time none of the nobility except the earls of Douglas and Moray even visited them, and when they were introduced to the king they were as much shocked with his appearance as with that of the country: "at his red bleared eyes, and at his whole appearance, which convinced them that he was no warrior."

When they wanted to begin the campaign, they complained that the Scots wanted to be paid for fighting their own battles, and would not budge a foot till the forty thousand livres were distributed amongst them. In short, it did not tend much to the mutual satisfaction of their allies that the gay Frenchmen had come over.

At length, the forces being paid, the united army of France and Scotland descended on Northumberland, and took three castles in the marches, but, on the approach of the English, as rapidly retired. John of Vienne was astonished at their retreat, allowing the enemy to pillage their country, but they told him they did not pretend to make resistance to so powerful a force; that all their cattle were driven into the woods and fastnesses; that their houses and chattels were of small value; and that they well knew how to compensate themselves. Accordingly, as Richard advanced into Scotland by Berwick and the east coast, the Scots, accompanied by the French, poured thirty thousand men into England by the west, and, ravaging Westmoreland, Cumberland, and Lancashire, collected a splendid booty, and returned well satisfied to their country.

Richard was now, for the first time, at the head of an army against a foreign enemy. He had before only led his forces against his own peasantry. His host is variously estimated at sixty thousand and eighty thousand men; but, before he passed the English borders, an incident occurred which marred all his satisfaction. Lord Stafford, son of the earl of Stafford, one of the king's favourites, and in high favour with queen Anne, both on account of his chivalrous and his virtuous qualities, was on the way with despatches from the king to the queen, when, some affray having taken place amongst their retainers, John Holland struck down the young lord without personal provocation, and killed him on the spot. Jealousy of the queen's favour and malice against her adherents is said to have been the real cause of this atrocious deed. The murderer fled for sanctuary to the church at Beverley. The earl of Stafford and his family were loud in their demands of justice on the miscreant, and Richard vowed that he would hang him if ever he ventured out of the sanctuary of St. John of

DEATH OF WAT TYLER. (See page 413.)

Beverley. Meantime, he confiscated his estates. Their common mother, the "Fair Maid of Kent," prostrated by grief at this second deed of her assassin son, wept for four days, entreating the king in vain to spare the malefactor's life. She then sunk, heart broken, on the fifth day, at the castle of Wallingford. Her death so affected Richard, who was a most affectionate son, that he pardoned the criminal when it was too late to save his mother.

Richard now marched into Scotland without being able to find any enemy. He reduced to ashes Edinburgh, Dunfermline, Perth, and Dundee, and he was about to perpetrate the same rigour on Aberdeen, when the news reached him that the Scots were laying waste Cumberland, and John of Vienne was besieging Carlisle. He then made a rapid countermarch, in order to intercept them, but on the way another of his favourites, Sir Michael de la Pole, infused some fresh suspicions into the king's mind regarding Lancaster, and the following morning Richard angrily announced his intention of returning home. In vain Lancaster protested against it; the king persisted in his intention. He disbanded his army; and, on the other hand, the Scots declaring that they found the heavy French cavalry of no use in their desultory species of warfare, behaved with so much rudeness to them, that they also returned home, much disgusted, says Froissart, "with the country, and the manners of the inhabitants."

In the parliament which met in November following Richard confirmed various honours which he conferred during the expedition. He was anxious to allay the jealousies between his relatives and his favourites. He therefore created his uncles, the earls of Cambridge and Buckingham, dukes of York and Gloucester, with a new grant of lands of the annual value of £1,000 each. Henry Bolingbroke, the son of Lancaster, and Edward Plantagenet, the son of the duke of York, he made earls of Derby and Rutland. But then he proceeded to heap similar honours and emoluments on his favourites. Robert de Vere, a handsome young man, of good family, but of dissolute manners, he created earl of Oxford, with the title of marquis of Dublin—a title before unknown in England; and transferred to him by patent, which was confirmed by parliament, the entire sovereignty of that island for life. He gave him in marriage his relative, the daughter of Ingelram de Couci, earl of Bedford; but De Vere became deeply enamoured of one of the queen's ladies of the bedchamber, a Bohemian, the landgravine of Luxembourg, and therefore allied to the imperial family. Not only the king but the pious queen favoured his suit, and obtained a divorce and dispensation for his fresh marriage from the pope. This transaction gave deep offence to the English nation, for the rejected wife was the granddaughter of the great Edward III. and Philippa of Hainault. Her uncles, the dukes of Gloucester, York, and Lancaster, were still more deeply incensed.

Michael de la Pole, the other chief favourite, was created earl of Suffolk, with the reversion of the estates of the late earl on the deaths of his widow and the queen. As Richard had no children, he at the same time, in order to cut off the aspirings of the duke of Lancaster, named Roger, earl of March, and grandson of Lionel, duke of Clarence, his heir to the throne.

The duke of Lancaster thus, after repeatedly avowed suspicions of his designs on the throne, now so markedly cut off, found it most agreeable to retire awhile from court; and no fairer plan could present itself than that of prosecuting his claims on the crown of Spain, in which his brother, the earl of Cambridge, had been so unsuccessful. John, the newly-chosen king of Portugal, had sent to invite him to come over and support him against their common enemy, the king of Spain. Nothing could be more agreeable to Lancaster, and Richard was equally glad to have him out of the way. One half of the year's supply was devoted to the purposes of this expedition. Twenty thousand men were mustered, and before John of Gaunt and Constance his wife, princess of Spain, set out, the king presented him with a crown of gold, as confident that he would wear it; and the queen presented one also to the duchess. The fleet sailed from Plymouth in July, 1386, and the duke arriving safely in Portugal, his eldest daughter, Philippa, was married to the king. During the first campaign the duke carried all before him; but the second summer consumed his army by its heat, and compelled him himself to retire to Guienne. But by successful policy he now even managed to become reconciled to the king of Spain, and married his second daughter to the son and heir of that monarch. Thus John of Gaunt, though destined never to wear a crown himself, was the father of two queens. His duchess Constance made over her claims on the Spanish throne to her daughter Catherine, and their descendants reigned over Spain for many generations. For himself he received two hundred thousand crowns to defray the expenses of the expedition, and an annuity was settled on him of one hundred thousand florins, and the same amount on the duchess.

While the duke of Lancaster was absent the restless duke of Gloucester became more assuming and imperious than Lancaster had ever been towards the king. He fomented the jealousies of the nobles, insisted on remodelling the government, and reduced the king to a mere automaton. At the same time the French, also taking advantage of the great duke's absence, contemplated a formidable invasion of the island. Their preparations were on the most extensive scale, both in men and ships. The army is said to have exceeded one hundred thousand men; and their vessels in the port of Sluys, it was vaunted, could, if placed side by side, have bridged the whole Channel. The nobility and gentlemen of France seemed every one burning with desire to avenge the injuries and defeats they had so often suffered from the English. The news of this stupendous armament spread dismay through the country; troops were assembled, beacons erected; and the earl of Arundel appointed high admiral, with orders to destroy the ships of the enemy the moment they landed, and leave the inhabitants to lay waste the country before them, and then deal with them at leisure. But the fate of this armada was the same which has providentially attended all yet directed against the British isles. It was dispersed by a terrible tempest; the army was disbanded; and the earl of Arundel, executing his commission with great vigour, took one hundred and sixty vessels, laden chiefly with wine, relieved the garrison of Brest, and then, proceeding to the port of Sluys, destroyed all the ships there, and laid waste the country round to the distance of ten leagues.

After this brilliant issue of the threatened danger the nation was all gaiety and rejoicing; but the factious Gloucester resolved that his royal nephew should not re-

joice long. He collected his partisans, and determined to drive the king's favourites from office. They contended that the people were so fleeced by the tax-gatherers, that the land-owners could not collect their rents; that the ministers and their officers embezzled the public moneys. The first on whom they meant to open their charge was the chancellor, De la Pole, the new earl of Oxford. The chancellor opened the parliament, which met at Westminster, in October, 1386, with a bold announcement: the king, he said, was resolved to punish the French for their menaced invasion, by passing over at the head of a suitable armament, and carrying the war into France. He requested them to take into consideration the necessary supplies for so great and national an enterprise. But the lords and commons met this by a joint petition for the dismissal of the ministers and members of council, and especially of the chancellor. The king, greatly enraged, at first contemplated—that which was long after so fatally done by Charles I.—seizing the leaders of the opposition; but, finding that he should not be supported in this out of doors, he retired to his palace at Eltham, and then, giving way, drove to town, dismissed the obnoxious ministers, and made the bishop of Hereford treasurer. But this concession, so far from appeasing Gloucester and his adherents, only made them feel surer of their real object. They impeached the chancellor; and, though they could prove little against him, they caused him to be imprisoned during the king's pleasure, and fined. So long as the parliament sat, Oxford suffered his sentence; but as soon as it was dissolved the king liberated him.

This impeachment by the commons is a most memorable event: it is a striking proof of the wonderful manner in which the power of that body had grown in a few years. This was the second instance of the kind, the former occurring just at the close of the last reign. But now the prosecution was directed in a more determined and unanimous manner, and against an officer not only of high rank, but high in the monarch's favour. We have no longer the commons of England humbly crouching, as it were, before the imperious barons, and scarcely daring to consider the benches they occupied at the lower end of the general parliament as their own, but evidently feeling their real dignity and power; no longer confining themselves to voting away their own money, or meekly offering a petition of grievances, but exercising the daring functions of the public tribune, and calling to account the monarch through his ministers.

Emboldened by this second success, the opposition proposed to establish a permanent council, like those in the reigns of John, Henry III., and Edward II., with authority to reform the government. The king indignantly declared that he would never consent, but would dissolve the parliament. But again the commons coolly presented to him the statute by which Edward II. had been deposed, and at this significant hint the awe-struck king gave way, and signed a commission, appointing a council of fourteen persons, prelates and peers, including the three great officers of state, all of Gloucester's faction, except Neville, archbishop of York. They were empowered to inquire into everything in the household, the ministry, the courts of law, and the condition of the people. Gloucester was at the head, and the king, now nearly twenty-one years of age, was virtually deposed. The whole sovereign prerogative lay in the council, and for twelve months, the term assigned to this junto, Richard was nothing.

It was not to be expected that a young monarch of Richard's quick feelings could tamely acquiesce in such a tyrannic tutelage as this. His favourites did their part in stimulating him to resistance. At the close of the session of parliament he entered a protest against this invasion of the royal prerogative, and began to seek the means to break up this irksome circle of control. He sounded the sheriffs of the counties, but they had been appointed by his uncles, and he found them in their interest. He therefore set out on a sort of royal progress, and used every endeavour to make himself popular with his subjects. Wherever he came he marked his arrival by some act of grace. The gentlemen of the county and the burghers of the principal towns were invited to his court, and were received with the utmost affability. This won greatly upon them, and there was a general avowal of a determination to stand by him and the royal authority. He went to York, to Chester, to Shrewsbury, and thence to Nottingham. At the two latter places he held councils of the judges, and took their opinion on the conditions which the parliament had forced upon him. At the first of these councils attended Sir Rober Bealknap, the chief justice; Sir John Holt and Sir William Burgh, justices of the King's Bench; and Sir John Cary, chief baron of the Exchequer. The same dersons attended also the second council at Nottingham, with the exception of the chief baron, and the addition of Sir Robert Fulthorpe, justice of the King's Bench; Sir Robert Tresilian lord chief justice; and John Lokton, the king's sergeant-at-law.

Here the judges, who in those days were not independent of the crown as they are at present, proved as subservient to the king as parliament had showed itself subservient to the aristocratic faction; declared that the commission was wholly subversive of the constitution; that those who introduced the measure, or induced the king to consent to it, were liable to capital punishment; that all who compelled him to observe it, or prevented his exercise of his rights, were traitors; that the king and not the lords and commons had the power to determine the order in which questions should be debated in parliament; that it was for the king to dissolve parliament at pleasure. Still more: that the lords and commons had no power to impeach the king's ministers, officers, or justices; that those who introduced and passed the statute of deposition of Edward II. were traitors; and that the judgment against the earl of Suffolk was unconstitutional and invalid altogether.

This sweeping judgment, which annihilated the power of parliament, and made the crown all but independent, was signed and sealed by the judges, in the presence of the archbishops of York and Dublin, the bishops of Durham, Chichester, and Bangor, the duke of Ireland, the earl of Suffolk, and two other counsellors.

Armed with this potent instrument, Richard prepared to take vengeance on his dictators. He determined to arrest the chief of his opponents, and send them to be judged before the very men who had thus prejudged them. Thomas Usk was appointed sub-sheriff of Middlesex; a bill of indictment was prepared; Sir Nicholas Brembre, who had been three times mayor of London, undertook to influence the city, and even swore-in different companies "to stand to the death for the king." The commission was to expire on the

nineteenth of November, and on the tenth Richard entered London amidst the acclamations of the people. The mayor and principal citizens wore the royal livery of white and crimson, and a vast crowd attended him to St. Paul's, and then to his palace of Westminster.

Everything appeared conspiring to his wishes; he retired to rest elated with his success, and calculating on the defeat of his enemies; but when he awoke in the morning it was to a sad reverse. He learned that a strong force, stated at forty thousand men, had arrived in the vicinity of the city under the command of the duke of Gloucester and the earls of Arundel and Nottingham. During the whole time that he had been making his preparations to seize the members of the council they had been carefully watching and cautiously following him. The very day after the judges had delivered their decision at Nottingham, and bound themselves to keep it profoundly secret, one of them in the other interest, Sir Richard Fulthorpe, had betrayed the whole matter to the earl of Kent, and through him to the duke of Gloucester. A royal proclamation was issued forbidding the citizens to aid or supply with provisions the armed force without; but the confederates, the next day advancing to Hackney, sent in a letter to the mayor and corporation, commanding them, under menace of severe penalties, to give their assistance to the loyal object of delivering the king from the hands of traitors, and requiring an immediate answer. On the 13th the earls of Derby and Warwick went out and joined them at Waltham Cross, and the members of the commission "appealed," as they termed it, of treason the archbishop of York, the duke of Ireland, the earl of Suffolk, Sir Robert Tresilian, and Sir Nicholas Brembre.

This "appeal" they sent to the king by the archbishop of Canterbury, and the lords Cobham, Lovel, and Devereaux. Richard was obliged to give way, for he now perceived that, after all, the city was not with him; and on Sunday the 17th the appellants marched into London, and appearing before the king in Westminster Hall, formally preferred the charge of high treason against the aforesaid persons. The accused fled. De la Pole, the earl of Suffolk, succeeded in reaching France, where he soon after died. De Vere, the duke of Ireland, hastened to Wales, where the letters of the king overtook him, commanding him to raise the royal standard, and promising to join him on the first opportunity. The duke was encouraged by the adherence of Molyneux, the constable of Chester, who came with a strong body of archers; but Gloucester, who only wanted a plea for deposing his nephew, eagerly seized on this circumstance, and agreed with Arundel, Warwick, and Sir Thomas Mortimer at Huntingdon to "depose Richard and take the crown into his own custody." De Vere was rapidly marching towards London, but was met by Gloucester and lord Derby, Lancaster's son, at Radcot Bridge, in Oxfordshire, and utterly routed. Molyneux was slain, but De Vere made his escape to Ireland, and thence to Holland, where he died about four years afterwards.

The successful appellants returned to London at the head of their forty thousand men, and presented thirty-nine articles of impeachment against the five already named, the archbishop of York, Suffolk, De Vere, Tresilian the judge, and Brembre, mayor of London. All, except Brembre, who was in prison, had fled, and all the judges, except Sir William Skepworth, were arrested as they sat in their courts, and committed to the Tower. The king demanded the opinion of the principal lawyers of the day on the validity of the impeachment, who unanimously declared it to be informal and illegal. But the peers determined to proceed; on which the bishops and abbots all protested against taking any part in judgments of blood, and left the house in a body. The accused were condemned and adjudged to death; but only Sir Nicholas Brembre and Tresilian the judge, who was hated by the people for his bloody sentences on those involved in the late insurrection, and who was betrayed in his concealment by a servant, were executed.

Nothing could be more arbitrary than the proceedings of this "Wonderful Parliament," as it was called. Brembre, who was a commoner, was adjudged and condemned by the peers, who were certainly not his peers. The archbishop of York had crossed to Flanders, where he passed the short remainder of his days as a humble parish priest.

The "Wonderful Parliament," or, as others termed it, "the Merciless Parliament," which sat all the spring of 1388, and was dissolved on the 3rd of June, employed itself, at the instigation of the vindictive Gloucester, who had a savage thirst of blood, in imprisoning, condemning, and driving away the king's friends, even to his confessor. The judges who gave the extra-judicial answers to the king at Nottingham were condemned to death; but, at the intercession of the bishops, were banished to Ireland; while Blake, the secretary who drew up those answers, and Usk, who had been made under-sheriff, were put to death. Sir John Beauchamp, Sir James Berners, Sir John Salisbury, and Sir Simon Burley were all executed, Salisbury being drawn and hanged.

The fate of Sir Simon Burley excited the deepest and most general sympathy, and his death, in resistance to all the earnest appeals on his behalf, betrays the most sanguinary obstinacy in the callous Gloucester. Sir Simon lived a long and distinguished life. He belonged to the court and camp of Edward III.; had been appointed by the Black Prince as the most suitable guardian for Richard; had attended the young king from his infancy; and negotiated his marriage with the good queen Anne. Richard, who loved and revered him as a father, pleaded for him with his ruthless uncle in vain. For three weeks he refused to sign any warrant for his execution, and it was carried out at last without his assent. The queen was on her knees for three hours before Gloucester, imploring him, but in vain, to spare the good Sir Simon; and even the earl of Derby added his earnest entreaty, and proceeded to actual quarrel with his uncle to prevent this atrocity, but without moving the stern tyrant from his purpose.

Gloucester did not suffer the parliament to dissolve without an order for the expulsion of the Bohemians who attended the queen, or without passing acts to incapacitate the king from reversing the attainders which they had issued. This strange parliament at once declared that its judgments should never be reversed, nor any of its statutes ever repealed. Yet it declared that it had pronounced things treason which had never been so held before, and therefore no judge should ever make its example a precedent. It gave to the appellants twenty thousand pounds in remuneration for their services, and granted to them and their friends a full indemnity, besides a general pardon

to the opposite party, with the exception of eighteen persons named.

Richard, stunned, as it were, by this stern and sanguinary demonstration on the part of his great and haughty relatives, remained for about twelve months passive, and in a manner extinguished in his own kingdom. But we may rest satisfied that he never for a moment in his own mind intended that this state of things should last a day longer than he could help, or that they who now carried measures against him with a high hand and a combined power, should escape their due punishment. He felt that the "sons of Zeruiah were too strong for him;" that his arbitrary uncles and cousins had artfully raised the public will against him, and it were vain to oppose. Gloucester had done his bloody work; and it only required time to make the nation feel repugnance to the agency of so much cruelty. His administration did not by its splendour conceal the hideousness of the acts on which his power was based. Arundel, indeed, did some brave deeds at sea; but the only brilliant deed on land was the battle of Otterburne, which has been so celebrated by the minstrels of that day, as may be seen in Percy's "Reliques of English Poetry." It was fought on the 15th of August, 1388, and Douglas, the Scottish chief, was killed; but on the English side Sir Henry Percy, the celebrated Hotspur, and Ralph Percy were taken prisoners, and the English, according to Froissart, were driven from the field; though English writers give a different account, each party, in fact, claiming the victory.

By degrees the terror which Gloucester had inspired began to die away from the minds of men; they began to sympathise with their youthful king, kept in such unworthy subjection, and to offer to him their aid and services. No sooner did Richard feel conscious of this change in the public feeling than he gave one of those proofs of high thought, and bold, prompt action, which, if they had been the results of a steady, energetic temperament, and not mere evanescent flashes, would have made his enemies stoop in awe before him, and his reign fortunate. In a great council held in May, 1389, he suddenly addressed his uncle Gloucester: "How old do you think I am?" "Your highness," replied Gloucester, "is in your twenty-second year." "Then," said the king, "I must surely be old enough to manage my own concerns. I have been longer under the control of guardians than any ward in my dominions. I thank ye, my lords, for your past services, but I require them no longer."

Before the council could recover from its surprise he demanded the great seals from the archbishop of Canterbury, and gave them to William Wykeham, bishop of Winchester, and the keys of the exchequer from the bishop of Hereford, handing them to one of his own friends. Gloucester, after a private interview with his nephew, finding it impossible to move him, retired into the country. Richard retained his uncle York, and his cousin Henry of Bolingbroke in his favour, and entrusted them with the chief administration of affairs.

For about eight years Richard ruled with a moderation and a deference to the rights of parliament and the people, which won him much popularity. He, on one occasion, voluntarily remitted some subsidies, declaring that he would not call for them till he really needed them. His uncle Lancaster returned from Spain, and having placed his two daughters on the thrones of that country and of Portugal, he appeared satisfied in his ambition, and disposed not only to acquiescence in the sway of his nephew, but also to reconcile him to the offending Gloucester, whom he brought again to court. It was not long, however, before there was great division between the royal brothers; for, Lancaster's wife being dead, he married Catherine Swineford, a daughter of a private gentleman of Hainault, who had been his mistress, and by whom he had several children. His brothers York and Gloucester were highly incensed at this marriage of the great John of Gaunt, regarding the lady of far too inferior birth to enter into their alliance; but Richard not only countenanced his uncle in this honourable proceeding, but passed an act through parliament to legitimise the children, and created the eldest son earl of Somerset.

By this rupture between the royal brothers the power of Richard was left unassailed, which it never was when they were united, and the country enjoyed internal tranquillity. He ceded to his uncle of Lancaster the province of Guienne for life; but as the inhabitants remonstrated loudly against this act, it was finally revoked with the duke's consent. He concluded a peace with France in 1394, which also included Scotland; Robert II. having died in 1390, and John, his eldest son, now reigning under the title of Robert III., the Scotch entertaining the same prejudice against a king of the name of John as the French and English, each nation remembering with disgust the reign of a king John.

Meantime Richard frequently met his parliament, and appeared on all occasions anxious to possess its approbation. He even on one occasion asked his officers of state to resign, and place themselves at the bar of parliament, requesting every one who had cause of complaint to prefer it. Pleased with this condescension, parliament not only bore willing testimony to the honour of the ministers, but were ready to meet all the king's demands for money. By consent of parliament, also, he recalled such of the bishops who had been banished to Ireland as now survived; made his confessor a bishop; and, moreover, on hearing of the death of the duke of Ireland, he restored the earldom of Oxford in favour of his uncle, Sir Aubrey de Vere, and afterwards had the body of the duke brought from Louvain, and re-interred with great state in the church of Colne.

At this time also, after much dispute with Rome regarding the appointment by the pope of foreigners to English bishoprics and livings, he settled that question on a better basis than it had yet occupied, passing the last and most comprehensive of the statutes of provisors, or *præmunire*, by which it is provided that any persons receiving such investment from Rome, or carrying causes there, shall, with all their abettors, suffer forfeiture of all their goods, chattels, and lands, wherever found, and be put out of the king's protection.

These were years in which Richard appeared to realise the early auguries of his reign, and act with such wisdom and moderation as make the later portion of his days a marvel and a sad mystery. But we believe the mystery will be solved by the fact that he now—that is, in June, 1394—lost his excellent queen, the good queen Anne. She died at her favourite palace of Shene; and Richard, who had always been most ardently attached to her, was so

beside himself with grief at her loss, that, in a state of frenzy, he ordered the palace of Shene to be levelled with the ground; and the rooms where Anne died were actually dismantled.

Anne was a woman of most excellent heart and great piety. She was a fervent promoter of the Reformation; and it is a singular fact that Thomas Arundel, bishop of Ely, and afterwards archbishop of Canterbury, at her funeral preached a sermon in which, according to Rapin, he actually praised the queen for reading the Scriptures in the vulgar tongue. Yet this same Arundel was the first to procure an act for burning heretics, that is, those who, by following queen Anne's example, and reading these Scriptures, came to think differently to himself on some points.

From all that we learn of Anne it appears very evident that her influence over Richard was of the most beneficial kind, and that the longer she lived the more prudent and popular he became. With her he lost his compass and his guiding star, and wandered off the good way. We find soon after that he had grown indolent, self-indulgent, devoted to low society and low pleasures, and thus lost his own dignity and the love of his people. With a fresh alliance, too, came a fresh spirit, fresh projects, and revival of the old spirit of vengeance, which led him to dip his hands in the blood of those of his kindred who had dealt hardly with him; and from this again sprung retaliation and his final fall.

In the immediate bitterness of his grief, however, he was advised, in order to divert his sorrow, to make a visit to his Irish dominions. There was certainly confusion enough there to occupy his thoughts. The wars of the three last monarchs, and the troubles of the second Edward, had withdrawn their attention from Ireland, and both the native and the English races there had made great encroach-

John Wycliffe.

ments on the authority of the government. The revenues had formerly produced a surplus of thirty thousand pounds; they were not now equal to the necessary expenses of the management of the island. The natives, asserting their ancient territories, were fast enclosing the English in narrower bounds; while the English were at variance amongst themselves. They were divided into two classes—those who had helped to conquer the country, and those who had been recently sent there by the English government. There were therefore English by race merely, and English by birth. The descendants of the original invaders had,

RICHARD II. ASSERTING HIS AUTHORITY. (See page 427.)

in proportion as they were remote from the seat of government, grown independent, and in many cases adopted the language and manners of the natives. Many of these men retained great numbers of armed followers; made inroads on their neighbours; ruled as kings in their own districts, and expelled all thence who would not conform to their will. Such was Thomas Fitzmaurice, who, to secure his good-will, was created earl of Desmond, and who yet was rather a terror than a strength to the government.

These old settlers, the English by race merely, were extremely jealous of new arrivals, many of them being poor courtiers who were sent there, as they are now sent to our colonies, to help themselves to what they could secure, and others banished men. These were supported by the English government as a counterbalance to the power of the native chiefs, and the English by race. Edward III. had indeed forbade any office to be held but by Englishmen still connected with England by property or office; but this produced such a ferment among the old Englishry that it was obliged to be abandoned. While these feuds and divisions weakened the English party, the native chiefs pushed on their advances, and the greater part of Ulster was recovered by the O'Neals, much of Connaught was regained by the O'Connors, and the O'Briens made equal conquests in Leinster. To prevent amalgamation of the English chiefs with the native Irish, and thus strengthening their formidable native power, Edward III. had passed the famous statute of Kilkenny to which we have alluded, which made it high treason to marry with the Irish.

It was in the hope that an English nobleman residing in the country with a permanent right, and with almost regal power, might reduce the island to order, that Richard had made the earl of Oxford duke of Ireland, and granted to him and his heirs for ever all the lands which he should conquer from the native Irish, except such as they had retaken from the crown or from former grantees. The hopes which had been entertained from this scheme were defeated by the king's feud with the barons, and by the attainder and banishment of Oxford.

Richard now set out to reduce the different factions and restore order himself, at the head of four thousand men-at-arms and thirty thousand archers, and attended by the duke of Gloucester and the earls of Rutland and Nottingham. He landed at Waterford in October, 1394, and at the approach of so effective a force the most daring chieftains retired into their bogs and mountains. Such was the vigour with which Richard on this occasion prosecuted his object—no doubt finding a great relief to his mind in action—that very soon the Irish made terms of surrender, and the four principal kings, O'Neal, O'Brien, O'Connor, and M'Murchad, came in and attended the king to Dublin, where they were, no doubt much to the annoyance of their wild Irish habits, obliged to assume the outward smoothness of civilisation, most reluctantly induced to receive the honour of knighthood, to be arrayed in robes of state, and feasted in all decorum at the king's table.

The Irish chieftains, to the number of seventy-five, did homage, and agreed to the payment of a yearly tribute. Richard never on any occasion, not even in the Wat Tyler riots, displayed more energy and tact. He had all the qualities which should distinguish a monarch. He reformed the abuses of the government, redressed grievances, enforced the laws, removed tyrannical officers, and thus reconciled the minds of the Irish, and re-established the English supremacy.

This good work was interrupted by a violent dispute between the Lollards and the church at home. The reformers had acquired great power, and, feeling their influence amongst the people, they prepared a most sweeping petition to the commons, containing many great facts, which were yet too strong for reception by the government. They complained of the celibacy of the clergy; that, by accepting offices under government, and being ministers of state, and even generals, they became hermaphrodites—attempting to do the impossible thing, that of serving God and Mammon. They declared that by teaching transubstantiation they led to idolatry; that through the confessional they acquired a dangerous despotism over the people; by authorising war and criminal executions they opposed the law of Christ, which was one of love and mercy; and they even went the length of the modern Peace Society, asserting that by licensing men to exercise the trades of goldsmiths and swordsmiths they violated the principles of the gospel, which were those of simplicity and peace. It is remarkable how completely the Christians of the earliest reformation seized upon the doctrines regarding war and capital punishments which are now agitated, and not yet established.

Though no one was found hardy enough to present the petition, abounding with doctrines which, though they had existed in the New Testament for fourteen centuries, were still too new to the public for acceptance; yet the clergy were greatly alarmed at this demonstration, and solicited the protection of the king, who severely reprimanded the leaders of the Lollards, and ordered all teachers of that persuasion to be expelled from the university of Oxford. Good queen Anne was gone, and a new era, with new influences and fortunes, was at hand.

CHAPTER LXVII.

Reign of Richard II. continued—Richard marries Isabella of France—Murder of the Duke of Gloucester—Attainder of his Adherents—Banishment of the Dukes of Hereford and Norfolk—Arbitrary Conduct of the King—Goes to Ireland—Return of Hereford—Imprisonment, Deposition, and Murder of the King—His Character.

Richard now astonished the whole country by proposing to marry the eldest daughter of the king of France. The strong antipathy which the long and cruel wars had nourished between the two nations made them already regard each other as natural and hereditary enemies. Both the people of England and France, therefore, were surprised at this proposal, and averse to it. But the people are little consulted in any age in these matters; and the proposal, after some discussion at the French court, was well entertained. At the English court it was far from popular. The great princes and barons looked on the French wars as the sources of fresh military glory and promotion. The duke of Gloucester most of all expressed his opposition to it. He had more reasons than one. The first was, that he had a daughter whom he would fain see married to Richard. By this alliance he could calculate on his descendants succeeding to the throne of England, even if he could not himself usurp it. During the king's life, with his easy and pleasure-loving disposition, he could calculate on engrossing the real power of the state.

Not less strange was his second reason. If the king allied himself to France, he would thus greatly strengthen

his authority at home, and Gloucester was too far-seeing not to perceive that Richard, who never forgot an injury, would then be in a position to revenge himself on him for his past attempts to usurp the control over his nephew, and especially for the armed conspiracy which had destroyed his favourite ministers, and suspended his prerogative for twelve months.

That this marriage was a matter entirely of policy was clear enough. The French princess was a mere child, not much more than seven years of age. She was already affianced to the heir of the duke of Brittany. It would require a dispensation from the pope to make void that arrangement, and for many years to come Richard could not promise himself in his wife a womanly companion, a mature friend and counsellor, nor could hope to secure his throne by an heir. His attention was zealously turned to the princesses of Brabant, Germany, and Navarre, but to no purpose. He had resolved on the alliance with France, and ambassadors were sent to negotiate the affair, while Robert the Hermit, a personage high in favour with the French king, came for the like purpose to England. Froissart, who himself made a visit to England at this time, describes very amusingly the interview which the earl marshal and the earl of Rutland had with the French royal family and the future queen of England. "The earl marshal, being on his knees, said to her, 'Fair lady, by the grace of God, you shall be our lady and queen of England.' Then answered the young lady, well advisedly, without counsel of any other person, 'Sir, an it please God and my lord my father that I shall be queen of England, I shall be glad thereof, for it is showed me that I shall then be a great lady.' Then she took the earl marshal by the hand, and led him to the queen her mother, who had great joy of the answer that she had made, and so were all other that heard it. The manner, countenance, and behaviour of this young lady pleased greatly the ambassadors, and they said amongst themselves that she was likely to be a lady of high honour and great goodness." The little girl was affianced by proxy through the earl marshal, and "a goodly sight it was," says Froissart, "to see her behaviour; for all she was but young, right pleasantly she bore the part of a queen." In the joy of this transaction Sir John Mercer, who was formerly taken prisoner by Alderman Phillpot, and the count de la River, who had both been arrested on a political charge, were liberated by the French king.

The worthy chronicler details with great delight all the splendour of the meeting of the kings of France and England at Guisnes, near Calais, where they came attended by all the great princes, lords, and ladies of their courts. Lancaster and Gloucester, the latter most unwillingly, attended the king of England. Tents were put up for the two royal parties not far from each other, and the two monarchs went on foot, passing between two bodies of knights of each nation, four hundred in number, standing with their swords drawn. When the two kings met bareheaded, and took each other's hands, all the knights knelt down. Then the two kings went together into the tent of the king of France, which "was noble and rich," and the four royal dukes, Berri and Burgoyne, Lancaster and Gloucester, taking each other's hands, followed with other knights. The spectacle was striking, for it was long since any English and French kings had met in peace and amity. On the following Saturday, November 1, 1396, they met again in great state in the same place, and after a grand banquet in the French king's pavilion, the young queen was delivered to the king of England, and consigned by him to the care of the duchesses of Lancaster, Gloucester, York, and Ireland, with many other great ladies, but only one French attendant, the Countess de Courci. The next Tuesday the marriage ceremony was performed by the archbishop of Canterbury in the church of St. Nicholas, in Calais; and on arriving in England, Isabella was crowned in Westminster Abbey on the 1st of January, 1397. Richard received with her three hundred thousand francs in gold, and five hundred thousand more were to be paid by annual instalments. It was carefully stipulated that the issue of this marriage should derive no claim from the mother to the crown of France; and if the king should die before the queen reached her twelfth year, all the money paid should be returned with her to France.

The conduct of Richard after this marriage was such as to lead the people the more sensibly to deplore the death of the good queen Anne. Instead of the better spirit which had distinguished his latter years, instead of the wise and active conduct which he had displayed in Ireland while under the influence of a salutary sorrow, a light and thoughtless disposition had taken its place, as if a mere girlish wife had brought with her an atmosphere of trifling and frivolity. With the exception of his harsh treatment of the city a few years before, and the deprivation of its charter, which, though soon restored, had left a lively memory of the arbitrary fact, Richard's political conduct was not much to complain of. But his personal character was rapidly deteriorating. He became indolent, profuse and devoted to low pleasures and companions. He lived in a continual course of feasting and dissipation, and thus wasted the funds he had received with the queen, and the resources derived from his people.

Amongst the principal favourites of this time were his half-brother, the murderer, Sir John Holland, who had been on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in penance for his crimes and now was dignified with the title of the earl of Huntingdon, as his brother was of the earl of Kent. Through the hands of these men all favours and honours passed, and we cannot suppose that their conversations and counsels were very good for him. His household was on a most ruinous scale, consisting, it is said, of not less than ten thousand persons, and the riot and follies carried on there excited great disgust.

All these matters were carefully noted by the discontented duke of Gloucester, still more morose from the king's refusal of his daughter, on the plea of her being too near akin. Gloucester, during the whole marriage visit to France, did not conceal his hostility to the alliance. It was in vain that the king made him rich presents to win his good-will. He was still sullen, morose, and destitute of all courtesy, returning the attentions of the nobles with abrupt and curt answers, so that they said amongst themselves, if ever Gloucester could stir up a war he would.

On his return home after the marriage he disdained to cultivate the friendship of his nephew. On the contrary, he did everything possible to excite faction and mischief. He never attended the council except for the purpose of thwarting its proceedings. He came late, departed early, and while present treated the king with the most insolent air of superiority, often throwing out remarks, that he

might hear them, on his conduct, as effeminate and unlike that of his great ancestors. He talked in this manner to the warriors of the late reign, drawing comparisons between their days and deeds and the present.

These acts produced murmurs everywhere. The commons, on the meeting of parliament, presented a bill to the lords proposing the regulation of the king's household, complaining especially that so many bishops who had lordships of their own, and so many ladies with their servants, were always at the palace, and supported at the public cost. Richard, indignant at this bold measure, demanded who was the author of it; and it is curious that it turned out to be one Sir Thomas Haxey, a clergyman, proving that the clergy at that time sat in parliament, and the complaint itself that the bishops of those days were not averse to life, however gay, at a royal palace. Haxey was threatened with death, but was spared at the entreaty of the bishops—the very class he had complained of; but an act was immediately passed by the submissive parliament, that whoever again should make any such motion in the commons, or should in any way attempt to reform the royal conduct, rule, or authority, should be held to be a traitor.

This only strengthened the hands of Gloucester. He was eagerly listened to by all classes. The knights and barons were influenced by his representations of the glories won in the late reigns, and of the ease with which the wealth of France might be won by the superiority of their English valour. The people seized eagerly on the same ideas; all combined to echo the charges of the pusillanimity of the king, and to applaud Gloucester as the greatest of patriots, and the champion of the British honour and advancement. His great abilities, his affable manners, his vast wealth, and his royal blood, all were placed in the scale against the voluptuous king, and made a profound impression.

It is asserted by Froissart that Gloucester did not confine himself to seditious language, but had actually proposed to his nephew, Roger Mortimer, the earl of March, whom Richard had declared his successor, to give him immediate possession of the throne; and when that nobleman declined the offer, had laid a plan with his two brothers, the archbishop of Canterbury, and the earls of Arundel and Warwick, to depose Richard.

Whether this last assertion be true or not, the temper and conduct of Gloucester now became such as naturally excited the resentment of Richard. He appeared at first only desirous to get him out of the way: for which purpose he gave him permission to join the Christians who were fighting against the infidels in Prussia; but, though he set out, he returned in a few days, saying he had been driven back by a tempest. He then appointed him governor of Ireland; but Gloucester made no attempt to go over and assume that office.

This conduct of the duke of Gloucester at length wore out the patience of Richard. He remembered vividly his past offences: he saw no means of dissipating his obstinate contempt and hostility. His favourites, with whom Gloucester kept no terms, urged him to severe measures; and the court of France, which he had insulted by his sullen aversion, and which beheld in him an avowed enemy to its peace and its alliance, strongly stimulated the king to provide for his own safety and that of his queen, by depriving the traitorous prince of his power to carry out his designs.

No sooner did Richard resolve to follow this advice than he put his resolve into execution. He invited the earl of Warwick to dinner, and then, being off his guard, he had him arrested at the house of the chancellor, near Temple Bar, and committed to the Tower. The primate was made use of to bring his brother, the earl of Arundel, to a private interview with the king, who instantly arrested him and sent him to Carisbrook Castle. But perhaps the most revolting of these insidious modes of seizure was that of the duke of Gloucester himself. Richard, while intending to sacrifice his uncle's life, did not hesitate to make a visit to him at his castle of Pleshy, in Essex, where Gloucester, coming forth with his wife and daughter to meet him, without any suspicion, according to the account of the rolls of parliament, "domino regi cum processione solemni humiliter occurrentem," he caused him to be seized and hurried on board a vessel by the earl marshal, and conveyed to Calais. It is said by cotemporary chroniclers that, while this was doing, Richard was conversing in a friendly guise with the duchess. Froissart says Richard was kindly entertained, requested Gloucester to accompany him to London, and had him seized on the way. This does not appear probable if the parliamentary rolls are correct. But in any case the manner of the thing was treacherous, and unworthy of a great monarch.

The sudden disappearance of the duke alarmed all his friends and partisans, who believed that he was murdered, and they trembled for their own security. To pacify the public mind, Richard issued a proclamation stating that these arrests had been made with the full assent of the dukes of Lancaster and York, and of their sons and all the leading members of the council; that they were made, not on account of the transactions of the tenth and eleventh years of his reign, for which bills of indemnity had been given, but for recent offences; and that no one need be alarmed on account of participation in those past proceedings.

This was to lull into security fresh victims, and to obtain that sanction from Lancaster, York, and their sons, which Richard pretended to have had, and which was not true. These princes were at Nottingham, and Richard determined to retort upon them their conduct towards his favourites. He therefore hastened down thither, and as these noblemen were at dinner he suddenly summoned them to the gate, and compelled them to set their seals to a form of arrest which had been prepared for the purpose. They were made to say "We appeal Thomas duke of Gloucester, Richard earl of Arundel, and Thomas earl of Warwick, as traitors to your majesty and realm," and to call for trial upon them.

On returning to the hall they found the king seated on the throne, wearing his crown, who granted the request they had been induced to make, and appointed a parliament to hear the cause on the 17th of the following month, September, 1397.

About three weeks later Sir William Rickhill, one of the justices, was suddenly roused from his bed at midnight at Essingham, in Kent, and ordered to hasten to Dover and follow the earl of Nottingham, the earl marshal, to Calais. On his arrival there the earl put into his hand a commission to examine the duke of Gloucester, whom he had imagined for some weeks was dead. Sir William refused to perform this office unless accompanied by two witnesses; and, on being admitted, advised Gloucester to return his answer in writing and to keep a copy. This caution afterwards saved the life of the prudent judge,

who knew the danger of being the sole repository of a king's secrets. As soon as he had received Gloucester's statement he was refused further admittance to him.

To secure his measures Richard employed every means to impress the parliament and public with awe. Great preparations were made for the assembling of a parliament which was to decide the fate of a prince of the blood, and one so powerful and popular, as well as of some of the chief nobles of the realm. It is said that the sheriffs had been tampered with; a most base and unconstitutional act, and which, resorted to in the assembling of this famous parliament, opened the way for much subsequent corruption of the kind. A wooden shed of great extent was erected near Westminster Hall for the reception of so numerous an assembly as was summoned to give the greater sanction to its decrees, and the lords came with such prodigious retinues, no doubt for their own safety, that they not only filled all the lodgings of London, but all the towns and villages for ten miles round.

The king came to Westminster attended by six hundred men at arms, wearing the royal livery of the hart, and two hundred archers, raised in Cheshire. On the second day of the session Sir John Bussy, the speaker, and a thorough creature of the king, petitioned that the clergy might appoint proxies, the canons forbidding their presence at any trials of blood, and lord Thomas Percy was appointed their procurator. The parliament passed whatever Richard was pleased to dictate to it. It annulled the commission of regency and the statute confirming it, passed in the tenth year of his reign. It abrogated all the acts which attainted the king's ministers, though the parliament which passed them and the people had sworn to maintain them for ever, and declared that they had been extorted by force. It revoked all pardons granted heretofore to Gloucester, Arundel, and Warwick.

This facile assembly first impeached Thomas Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury, as the aider and abettor of the accused noblemen, for having moved and advised the arrest and execution of Sir Simon Burley and Sir James Berners, contrary to the wishes of the king, and that while chancellor, and bound to support the rights of the crown. The archbishop rose to defend himself; but Richard, fearful of the effect of his eloquence, desired him to waive awhile his observations, on pretence of requiring more time to consider the matter; but the next day he was declared to be guilty, and banished for life.

The following day, September 21st, the charges were read to the lords against the three nobles. They were that Gloucester and Arundel had compelled the king, under menace of his life, to sign the commission of regency; that at Hornsey Park they had drawn to their party the earl of Warwick and Sir Thomas Mortimer, and by force had compelled the king to do their will. The earls of Rutland, Kent, Huntingdon, Somerset, Salisbury, and Nottingham, and the lords Spenser and Scrope were accused of the same crime. That at Huntingdon they had conspired to depose the king, and shown him the statute of the deposition of Edward II., and had also insisted on the death of Sir Simon Burley, in opposition to the king's will.

Arundel pleaded not guilty and former pardons; but he was condemned and executed. Warwick was convicted of high treason; but, on account of his submissive behaviour, his life was spared, and he was banished to the Isle of Man.

On the 24th a mandate was issued by the king and his council in parliament to the earl marshal to bring his prisoner, the duke of Gloucester, from Calais to the bar of the house. Three days after this an answer was returned by the earl marshal that "he could not produce the said duke before the king and his council in that parliament, for that, being in his custody in the king's prison at Calais, he there died."

The simple unexplanatory abruptness of this announcement is particularly startling. It immediately impresses the mind with the conviction of foul play; that the king, not daring to bring to further trial a prince so nearly related to the crown, and so highly esteemed by the people, and yet resolved not to let him escape, had procured his assassination. Apoplexy and other things were talked of, but there could be but one opinion of his end — murder. How this was effected has never been discovered. When Henry Bolingbroke had usurped Richard's throne, and it was his particular interest to prove Richard a murderer of their common uncle, one John Hall, a servant of the earl of Nottingham, was brought forward, who swore that to his knowledge the duke was taken from the prison to an inn, called the Prince's Inn, and there smothered between two beds by a servant of the king and another of the earl of Rutland. Though eight persons were named in the paper as being concerned in the transaction, none of these were ever examined, nor was Hall brought before any judge; but, having made this confession, was at once beheaded. It appears sufficiently clear, therefore, that this was an invention of Bolingbroke's to blacken the character of Richard. Froissart says he was strangled in prison by four people with towels; but the mode matters little, the fact of Gloucester's murder cannot admit of a doubt, and, whatever it was, the parliament appears to have troubled itself not at all about it. They declared, both lords and commons, that he was a traitor, and confiscated all his property to the crown.

The next day his confession, as delivered to Sir William Rickhill, was read in parliament. He acknowledged that he had been guilty of procuring the commission of regency; of presenting himself with an armed force before the king in Westminster Hall; of opening the king's letters without permission; of speaking slanderously of him; of employing threats to compel the death of Sir Simon Burley; and of having conspired to depose the king, though only for a few days, after which he meant to replace him on the throne. To this confession was appended the most earnest and humble appeal for mercy. But Gloucester had never shown mercy, and none was shown to him.

In this document, however, Gloucester confesses to nothing recent; the whole of it applies to the transactions of 1386 and 1387; and it is remarkable that it was for these offences that Warwick and Arundel were condemned. So that any recent act of treason really did not enter into these trials.

The rest of the nobles and prelates named in the indictment were then conditionally pardoned, except those who took up arms against the king in his eleventh year, including the lord Cobham, who was banished to Jersey for life, and Mortimer, who had fled into the wilds of Ireland and was outlawed.

What is extraordinary is, that several of the very peers who were engaged in these transactions, now declared

BETROTHAL OF THE FRENCH PRINCESS TO RICHARD II. (See page 429)

37 ARREST OF THE DUKE OF GLOUCESTER [illegible].

treasonable, sat in judgment on their more unlucky accomplices. The duke of York, the bishop of Winchester, and Sir Richard Scrope had been members of Gloucester's commission of regency; and Derby and Nottingham were two of the five who appealed the favourites of treason. Some of these were not only winked at, but even promoted when the trial was over. Richard, indeed, in parliament fully exculpated them; asserting that, though for a time deceived by the pretences of Gloucester, they had abandoned his cause like good and loyal subjects. He then created his cousins, Derby and Rutland, dukes of Hereford and Albemarle; his two half-brothers, the earls of Kent and Huntingdon, dukes of Surrey and Exeter; the earl of Nottingham, duke of Norfolk; the earl of Somerset, marquis of Dorset; the lords Despenser, Nevil, Percy, and William Scrope, earls of Gloucester, Westmoreland, Worcester, and Wiltshire.

On the last day of the session of this servile parliament the peers took an oath that all the judgments passed in this parliament should have the full force of statutes for ever; that any one attempting to reverse them should be held to be a traitor; and that the clergy should excommunicate him. The commons held out their hands in acquiescence with this oath, and lord Thomas Percy, the proxy of the clergy, swore on their behalf. The parliament was then prorogued till after the Christmas holidays, when it met at Shrewsbury.

Here, again, Richard displayed his anxiety to prevent any future charge against him of unconstitutional proceedings in this parliament. The guilt of blood was heavy on his soul, and he knew there were those living who, though he had sought to soothe them with titles and honours, trembled at their own insecurity, and might turn round some day with a terrible retaliation. He sought, therefore, to make that secure which his own acts and deeds showed was void of all security, for the next monarch who rose might reverse every one of these acts, as he had reversed former ones. Those who now swore to the eternal stability of these judgments had ten years before sworn exactly the contrary, and in two more years would swear the contrary again. Anxious, however, to make a rope of sand, to give duration to that which depended on the momentary breath of unprincipled men, he called in the judges to take their opinion of the answers of the judges ten years before at Nottingham; who now declared that that answer was sound and constitutional, and all the statutes of Gloucester's parliament, which had also been sworn to be indissoluble, were repealed as treasonable. Still not satisfied, Richard asked the judges if there were no other means of securing the authority of the acts of this parliament, who replied that the authority of parliament was above all other guarantees. What that guarantee was they had just themselves shown.

But, to bind the parliament, if possible, Richard desired the three estates of parliament, the peers, the prelates, and the commons, should swear their former oath on the cross of Canterbury. He asked them if it were not possible to bind their successors, and being told he could not—(it is wonderful that a parliament which had promised so much, could not also promise that little matter)—he then declared [illegible] got a bull from the pope to excommunicate [illegible] should attempt to annul any act of this [illegible] And he did in due time procure that bull. But now he had proclamation made out of doors amongst the people, asking if they would consent to this kind of security; and the people with loud acclamations declared they would. Thus the fickle people, equally subservient with the parliament, gave their sanction to the murder of their late idol Gloucester.

Perhaps no period of our history exhibits a monarch more reckless of the restraints of the constitution than Richard at this epoch; nor a parliament more servilely disposed to grovel at his feet, and surrender every valuable right. Before closing its sessions the commons not only granted him most liberal supplies, but a tax on wool, woolfells, and hides, not for the year as previously, but for *life*, thus rendering him, to a great degree, independent of parliament; and Richard, again, to provide against any repeal of this munificent grant, published a general pardon, which, however, was to become void the moment any future parliament attempted to repeal this act.

But this vile parliament went still further in surrendering the birthrights of the people. It had been customary to appoint a committee of the peers and judges formerly, to remain after the business of the session was completed, to hear and determine on such petitions as had not been already answered. Advantage was now taken to seize on this form of a committee to supersede the general functions of parliament; and twelve peers and six commoners, not judges or justices, were not only invested with the powers of the ancient committees, but also to "hear, examine, and determine all matters and subjects which had been moved in the presence of the king, with all the dependencies thereof." One half only of these were required to attend, so that to nine people were transferred all the powers and authority of parliament!

The immediate object of this stretch of parliamentary and, under its guise, of kingly power was to execute designs of the monarch which led to his ruin. Richard was of that light and sensitive character, and had been early so imbued with the idea of "the divinity that doth hedge about a king," that he was easily led on to the most arbitrary conduct. In the late proceedings against Gloucester and his adherents he had broken unceremoniously through all the restraints of the constitution, and the obsequiousness of parliament induced him now to imagine that he had placed himself above all law. Parliament had granted him supplies for life, and with the aid of the committee to which parliament had so tamely resigned its prerogative, "all persons well affected to the king," he could, he imagined, do just as he pleased; and he lost no time in putting this to the proof. He had destroyed Gloucester; he resolved to cut off or remove other overgrown relatives and nobles.

The lively and strong memory which Richard had always shown of past injuries, but never more so than during the late trials, struck terror into the hearts of many who were conscious that they had offended. Amongst these was the duke of Norfolk. At present he stood apparently high amongst Richard's friends; but he was well aware how slippery was that position, and he was conscious that his reluctance to carry out the bloody proscription against Gloucester would be treasured up in the king's never-failing remembrance for the first tempting occasion. Of the original lords appellants he only and the duke of Hereford now remained.

Norfolk happening to overtake Hereford, on the road between Brentford and London, the following conversation took place, according to Hereford's statement of it as it still remains on the rolls of parliament :—

Norfolk. We are on the point of being undone.

Hereford. Why so?

Norfolk. On account of the affair of Radcot-bridge.

Hereford. How can that be, since the king has granted us pardon, and has declared in parliament that we behaved as good and loyal subjects?

Norfolk. Nevertheless our fate will be like that of others before us. He will annul that record.

Hereford. It will be marvellous indeed, if the king, after having said so before the people, should cause it to be annulled.

Norfolk. It is a marvellous and false world that we live in; for I know well that, had it not been for some persons, my lord your father of Lancaster and yourself would have been taken or killed, when you went to Windsor after the parliament. The dukes of Albemarle and Exeter, and the earl of Worcester and I, have pledged ourselves never to assent to the undoing of any lord without just and reasonable cause. But this malicious project belongs to the duke of Surrey, the earls of Wiltshire and Salisbury, drawing to themselves the earl of Gloucester. They have sworn to undo six lords, the dukes of Lancaster, Hereford, Albemarle, and Exeter, the marquess of Dorset and myself; and have power to reverse the attainder of Thomas earl of Lancaster, which would turn to the derision of us and many others.

Hereford. God forbid! It will be a wonder if the king should assent to such designs. He appears to make me good cheer, and has promised to be my good lord. Indeed, he has sworn by St. Edward to be a good lord to me and others.

Norfolk. So he has often sworn to me by God's body, but I do not trust him the more for that. He is attempting to draw the earl of March into the scheme of the four lords to destroy the others.

Hereford. If that be the case we can never trust them.

Norfolk. Certainly not. Though they may not accomplish their purpose now, they will contrive to destroy us in our houses ten years hence.

Hereford must have taken the earliest opportunity to communicate this confidential conversation to the king. It showed him that the king was carefully watching those who had formerly appeared as his enemies. He was in haste, therefore, to secure himself by the sacrifice of the friend who had thus put him on his guard. Whatever were the steps he took for this end, he received a summons to attend the king at Haywood, where he was made to pledge himself on his allegiance to lay the whole of the preceding conversation before the council. Hereford took care not to leave the king without obtaining a full pardon for himself, under the great seal, for all the treasons, misprisions, and offences that he had ever committed.

Accordingly he appeared in full parliament, and laid this statement before them; but it contained so much which would naturally incense the king, that he went to Richard the next day, and, throwing himself on his knees before him, once more craved his pardon, declaring that, when he took part formerly in measures against the king, he did not know that he was doing wrong, but that now he knew it, and implored forgiveness for it. All this anxiety showed that he was conscious of having entered into the very conspiracies which he was now endeavouring to throw off upon others.

Richard, with his usual smooth duplicity, once more assured him before the whole parliament of his entire pardon, and promised him great favour. But Richard had, no doubt, already made up his mind as to what he would do. He had here strong hold on his turbulent and disaffected nobles, and he never let such advantages escape him. The great object, therefore, of obtaining a committee of men devoted to him, in whom were concentrated all the powers of parliament, was to deal with these two nobles, who were dangerous to the solidity of his throne.

To this convenient committee, this sort of pocket-parliament, Richard referred the decision of the cause between them. Norfolk, aware of danger, had not appeared in his place in parliament; but he was summoned by proclamation, and, on surrender, was brought before Richard at Oswaldstre. There he boldly declared his innocence, and denounced the whole of Hereford's story as false, "the lies of a false traitor."

Richard had them now in his power, and ordered them both into custody. He proceeded to Bristol, where his little pocket parliament went on exercising all the functions and authority of the real parliament; and Richard caused them to enact that their statutes were of equal authority with those of a full parliament, and should take the same effect; that all prelates before taking possession of their sees, all tenants of the crown before receiving possession of their lands, should take an oath to observe the enactments of this junto as perfectly as those of parliament itself; and that any person attempting to alter or revoke them should be guilty of treason. No more absolute independence of parliament was ever assumed in this country. The violations of the constitution for which Charles I. afterwards lost his head were not more outrageous than these.

The controversy between Hereford and Norfolk, it was decreed by this committee, should be referred to a high court of chivalry, which was appointed to take place at Windsor on the 29th of April. As Hereford here persisted in the charge, and Norfolk as stoutly denied it, and as no witnesses could be brought, the court determined that the decision of the question should be made by wager of battle, which was to take place at Coventry on the 16th of September.

There, at the moment that the two antagonists were on the point of running a tilt at each other, the king threw down his warder, and the earl marshal stayed the combat. The king then pronounced sentence of banishment upon them both, which, he informed them, was the judgment of the council. Hereford was exiled for ten years, Norfolk for life. It is clear, from the greater severity of the sentence of Norfolk, that the charges of Hereford had told against him. He was pronounced guilty of having, on his own confession, endeavoured to excite dissensions amongst the great lords, and of having secretly opposed the repeal of the acts of Gloucester's parliament. Richard took precautions to prevent the malcontents associating abroad so as to plot treason. The duke of Norfolk was commanded to go on pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and after that to reside only in Germany, Hungary, or Bohemia, and neither of the dukes was to hold any communication with the banished archbishop of Canterbury at any time during their exile.

Hereford, a man of consummate command of his temper, cool, calculating, and as unprincipled as he was ambitious, appeared to submit to this extraordinary, and, by all, unexpected sentence, with so much humility that he obtained from Richard various benefits which a more openly indignant man would have lost. In the first place, the king, touched by his submission, promised to shorten the term of his exile five years. He acceded to Hereford's request that letters patent should be granted to both the banished lords to appoint attorneys to take possession of any inheritances which might fall to them during their absence, though they could not be there to perform homage or swear fealty. This request has been pronounced by some historians a mysterious one, but there is no mystery about it. John of

Gaunt, Hereford's father, was now old and infirm, and not likely to live long. He had so lost all that high and swelling spirit which distinguished him through a long life, that he had consented to sign the royal acts against his own family; that for the attainder of his brother Gloucester, and now for the banishment of his own son. If he died while his son was abroad under sentence of banishment, all his vast estates would pass to the crown in default of the performance of the necessary feudal conditions of tenure. Hereford, aware of this, endeavoured to guard against it by this royal engagement, and, probably, that his design might not be too obvious, was a party to the extension of the favour to his opponent. We shall presently see that Hereford's precaution did not prevent Richard seizing on Lancaster's estates, as that sagacious nobleman feared; but it gave Hereford a grand plea for his return to vindicate his usurped rights.

The two banished dukes took their departure. Richard, to soften still more the mind of Hereford, sent him to Calais a present of a thousand marks. The unfortunate Norfolk, after his pilgrimage, returned, and died of a broken heart at Venice; and we may here notice the fate of the exiled archbishop of Canterbury. After residing some time in France, the pope appointed him to the see of St. Andrews in Scotland. To this Richard made some opposition; but, finding it unavailing, at length acquiesced.

Richard now imagined that he had reached the summit of uncontrollable power. With his taxes secured for life, instead of being compelled every year to come to parliament to solicit their renewal, and to be called to account by the commons for their expenditure; with his obsequious little pocket parliament; his council ready to decree any measure that he willed, however unjust and unconstitutional; and with a standing body of ten thousand archers, maintained out of those foolishly-conceded life-long supplies, Richard was, in fact, an absolute monarch. Froissart says, no man, however great, dared speak against anything that he did. He had lopped off or driven away the most powerful of his nobles and kinsmen; and he now raised money by forced loans. He compelled the judges to expound the law at his pleasure. He forced the unhappy adherents of Gloucester to purchase and re-purchase charters of pardon; and, to obtain plenty of fines and amercements, he at one stroke outlawed seventeen counties, on the charge of having favoured his enemies at the battle of Radcot-bridge. He could accuse both sides at pleasure of being his enemies; for, while he had secretly commissioned the duke of Ireland to take up arms, Gloucester and Hereford were ostensibly maintaining the royal cause.

The money thus expressed from his groaning subjects was spent with reckless extravagance. We have already spoken of the prodigal license and swarming numbers of his court. That of Edward III. had been esteemed very magnificent, but this of Richard far eclipsed it; and the chroniclers describe with wonder the gorgeous furniture and equipages, the feasts and pageants of this court, which had not the martial glory to make it tolerable to the people which Edward's had. It is said that the tailors, cloth merchants, cooks, jewellers, and hosts of retainers in costly liveries which frequented it were something inconceivable.

But, like that of many another thoughtless king, Richard's grandeur was hollow and delusive. It had no basis in the affections of any class of the community. The friends of Gloucester and Hereford, and the other nobles who were banished, were full of violent discontent, and secretly diffused it on every side. The people saw with indignation their hard-earned money wasted on the worst of creatures. Richard had made them his enemies in the very commencement of his reign by his perfidious conduct to them in the Wat Tyler insurrection, and by the cruelty with which he pursued them afterwards. As Shakespeare makes the nobles say:—

Ross. The commons hath he pilled with grievous taxes,
And quite lost their hearts: the nobles hath he fined
For ancient quarrels, and quite lost their hearts.

Wiltshire. And daily new exactions are devised;
As blanks, benevolences, and I wot not what:
But what o' God's name doth become of this?

Northumberland. Wars have not wasted it, for warred he hath not,
But basely yielded upon compromise
That which his ancestors achieved with blows.
More hath he spent in peace than they in wars.

There wanted but a match to explode the mine already laid by his folly and want of real regard to his people, under Richard's feet, and this came in the death of the aged John of Gaunt. He died about three months after the banishment of his son; an event which no doubt hastened his end.

Now was seen the wisdom of Hereford's act in procuring the letters patent for the securing of his inheritance, and the arbitrary rapacity of Richard, who at once declared, that Hereford being banished was tantamount to outlawry, which implied forfeiture of estate; and this dishonest and impolitic judgment a great council which he assembled, including his committee of parliament, confirmed. It declared the patents granted both to Hereford and Norfolk were utterly illegal and void. Neither Richard nor his council hesitated, when it pleased them, to stultify and declare unlawful their own most solemn acts. In fact, all faith was banished, and government was a farce, to be followed by a tragedy.

Richard seized on the vast estates of the banished Hereford, now duke of Lancaster, and when Henry Bowet, the duke's attorney, resisted this iniquitous proceeding, he also was arrested and condemned to death as a traitor, but let off with banishment. This most lawless deed appeared to put the climax to the national endurance. The people murmured, the nobles assumed a sullen and brooding aspect, and the whole nation was ripe for revolt.

Henry of Lancaster was not a man to let slip the favourable opportunity. He had always shown outward deference to the people; he waited and watched every movement from Paris where he resided, and where he had been on the point of strengthening his position by marrying the daughter of the duke of Berri, when Richard, in alarm, sent over an embassy and defeated it. Shakespeare makes Richard, addressing the earl of Albemarle, the son of the duke of York, express at once his own jealousy and the popular arts of Bolingbroke:—

King. He is our cousin, cousin: but 'tis doubt,
When time shall call him home from banishment,
Whether our kinsman come to see his friends.
Ourself, and Bushy, Bagot here, and Green,
Observed his courtship to the common people.
How he did seem to dive into their hearts,
With humble and familiar courtesy;
What reverence he did throw away on slaves,
Wooing poor craftsmen with the craft of smiles,
And patient underbearing of his fortune,
As 'twere to banish their affects with him.

> . if goes his bonnet to an oyster wench;
> A brace of draymen bid—"God speed him well,"
> And had the tribute of his supple knee,
> With "Thanks, my countrymen, my loving friends!"
> As were our England in reversion his,
> And he our subjects' next degree in hope.

In fact, such had been the crowding of the people to see the departure of Hereford, and such their manifest sympathy with him in this untoward fortune, that blind must the king have been not to perceive that the hearts of the people were with him, and that this act of severity had struck dangerously deep their affection. Froissart says there were not less "than forty thousand people weeping and crying after him, that it was pity to hear."

Yet at this crisis, when Hereford, newly become Lancaster, was maddened by the seizure of all his demesnes and honours, did Richard venture to leave his kingdom where he had not one real friend. His cousin and heir, the earl of March, had been surprised and killed in a skirmish with the Irish. Richard, with his quick, resentful feelings, in his eagerness to revenge his loss, determined at once to go to Ireland. He appointed the duke of York, his uncle, regent in his absence, attended mass at Windsor, and at the door of the church took wine and spices with his young queen, whom he repeatedly took up in his arms and kissed like a child, as she still was, being only about twelve years of age, saying, "Adieu, madam, adieu, till we meet again."

From Windsor, Richard, accompanied by several noblemen, marched to Bristol, where those circumstances were pressed on his attention which would have made any prudent monarch return with all speed to his capital. Reports of plots and discontents reached him from various quarters. The Londoners, who had always shown the most decided liking for the present duke of Lancaster, on hearing of Richard's voyage for Ireland, said amongst themselves, "Now goes Richard of Bordeaux to his destruction, as sure as did Edward II., his great-grandfather. Like him, he has listened so long to evil counsellors, that it can be neither concealed nor endured any longer."

There were numbers of officers in his army that were as disaffected, and amongst these were the lord Percy and his son. The king summoned these noblemen to his presence, but they got away into Scotland, and put themselves under the protection of king Robert. The condition of England at this moment was very miserable. There were general murmurings and divisions in the community. Robbers and robberies abounded, justice was perverted, and the people said it was time there was some remedy. The bishops and nobles got into London for safety, and those who had lost their relatives by the king's exactions rejoiced in the trouble, and wished to see it grow. In their eyes the duke of Gloucester had been a great and plain-spoken patriot, to whom the king would not listen, and who had lost his life through his honest representations of the condition of the country.

Under such circumstances Richard set sail at Milford Haven, and in two days, on May 31st, 1399, landed at Waterford. There he lost three weeks in waiting for the duke of Albemarle, who was to have followed him with another force, but who is supposed to have been influenced by the prevailing disaffection. At length Richard marched on towards Kilkenny, and many of the lesser chieftains came humbly with halters round their necks, suing for pardon. Not so the great chieftain M'Murchad. He came to a parley with Scrope, the earl of Gloucester, mounted on a magnificent gray charger, which had cost him four hundred head of cattle, and brandishing a huge spear in his hand. He expressed his willingness to become a nominal vassal of the crown, but would be free of all compulsion or conditions. Richard refused to treat with so independent an individual, but set a price on his head, and proceeded to Dublin, where he was at length joined by Albemarle, and he then again gave chase to the wild Irish chief. But in the midst of this pursuit he was suddenly arrested by news from England, which reduced all other considerations to nothing.

Lancaster had landed at Ravenspur, in Yorkshire, and was rapidly collecting an army and marching towards London. While the duke was brooding at Paris over the fresh indignity put upon him by Richard, who had sent the earl of Salisbury to break off the match with Marie, countess of Eu, daughter of the duke of Berri, the exiled archbishop of Canterbury arrived, bringing him the news of Richard's departure for Ireland, and the desire of the people of London for his arrival. To elude the vigilance of the French court, he obtained permission to visit the duke of Brittany, and he speedily set sail from Vannes for England. Three small vessels carried the whole of his invading army—namely, the archbishop, the son of the late earl of Arundel, fifteen lancers, and a few servants. But he had full reliance on the spirit which then animated all England. He was quickly joined by the earls of Westmoreland and Northumberland, to whom he declared, in the White Friars at Doncaster, that he came only to reclaim the honours and estates of his father, which were secured to him by the king himself by his letters patent; and he swore to make no claim upon the crown.

His uncle, the duke of York, as regent of the kingdom in the royal absence, advanced to St. Alban's to oppose ostensibly his progress; but it could not be supposed that he was very hearty in the cause, after having seen one brother murdered by the king, and the only son of the other, the great John of Gaunt, expelled and thwarted by him. The favourites of the king, the earl of Wiltshire, Bussy, and Green, who were not only members of the infamous council, but had been farmers and exactors of the oppressive taxes, showed a prudent doubt of any sure protection from such a champion as York. They had been appointed to wait on the young queen at Wallingford; but they took flight, leaving her to fate, and fled to Bristol, in expectation of meeting the king. York very soon took the same direction, no doubt in the desire to resign, as soon as possible, his responsibility into the hands of the king, for he felt that there was no reliance on his army.

Thus he left the way open to the capital, and Lancaster advanced along it with equal rapidity and success. The expression of Lingard is the most descriptive of his progress: "The snowball increased as it rolled along, and the small number of forty followers, with whom he had landed, swelled by the time he reached St. Alban's to sixty thousand men." He sent before him letters and messages, in which he stated his wrongs and the grievances of the people. One to the duke of York, entreating him not to "oppose a loyal and humble supplicant in recovering his sacred patrimony," is said to have drawn from the regent of the kingdom a declaration that he would second his nephew in so reasonable a request,

and the army is reported to have received it with acclamations.

On all the estates belonging to his family he was received with rapture, and the people of London came out to meet him, headed by the clergy, with addresses of congratulation and offers of assistance. But he did not make much delay in the metropolis: all was evidently his own there. He therefore made a rapid march after his uncle, to prevent his union with the king's forces, should he arrive, and he came up with him at Berkeley. After a friendly message from Lancaster, York met him in the castle church, and the result of their conference was that York joined his forces to those of Lancaster. Probably he might credit Lancaster that he sought only his just

Meanwhile Richard, having received this astounding news, prepared to pass over with his army. From this resolution the duke of Albemarle, who played constantly into the hands of the king's enemies, used every endeavour to persuade him. At length it was determined that the earl of Salisbury should sail with his own retainers, only a hundred men, and endeavour to raise the inhabitants of Wales, Richard promising to follow in a week.

Salisbury was successful. The men of both Wales and Cheshire flocked to the king's standard, and the earl looked impatiently for the king's arrival. But no Richard appeared; and it was not till nearly three weeks from Salisbury's setting out that Richard presented himself with the

Combat between the Earls of Norfolk and Hereford stopped by the King. (See page 435.)

demand of the enjoyment of his hereditary estates, which York had already avowed that he would aid him in. But from that moment the cause of Richard was betrayed, and his doom was sealed. York, on his authority as the king's lieutenant, ordered Sir Peter Courtenay, the governor of Bristol castle, to open its gates; Sir Peter protesting that he knew no authority but the king's, yet submitted to the commands of York as regent. The next morning, the three late members of the council and farmers of the taxes, the earl of Wiltshire, Bussy, and Green, were brought out and executed without any trial. The people had clamoured loudly for their blood, and were enthusiastically delighted at their deaths. The duke of York took up his quarters at Bristol, and Lancaster, who must have had full confidence in the adhesion of his uncle, went on to Chester, where the people were most favourable to the king, in order to secure the city.

dukes of Albemarle, Exeter, and Surrey, the earl of Worcester, the bishops of London, Lincoln, and Carlisle. If earls and bishops could have saved the throne, there was a fair array: but where was the army? Gone; melted away like a morning mist.

Scarcely had they landed, when the most general disaffection showed itself. The news of the duke of York having joined Lancaster was fatal; and Richard, looking out of his window on the second morning after his arrival at Milford Haven, saw that his army had vanished. A council was instantly held in the greatest consternation Some counselled the king to retire to his French provinces; but his evil genius, the duke of Exeter, the quondam murderer, John Holland, strongly urged him to hasten on to Conway, where the earl of Salisbury lay. If they could not make a stand there, they could still put out to sea for Guienne. This advice prevailed; but, such was the con-

MEETING OF RICHARD AND LANCASTER AT FLINT CASTLE. (See page 441.)

founded state of the royal councils that, instead of advancing there in a small but compact body, the king, disguised as a Franciscan friar, stole out of the camp at midnight, and, accompanied by his two half-brothers, Exeter and Surrey, the earl of Gloucester, the bishop of Carlisle, and a few other attendants, made their way towards Conway. As soon as their departure was known the military chest was plundered, and Albemarle, Worcester, and most of the leaders hastened to Lancaster, the rest dispersing and getting away to their own counties as best they might, insulted and plundered on their way by the Welsh.

Still more overwhelming news met the fugitive king on reaching Conway. Instead of a fine army, there lay Salisbury with only a hundred men, and destitute of all provisions. While Richard had delayed his coming all adverse influences had been brought to bear on Salisbury's host; disheartening rumours were circulated amongst the troops; and, spite of Salisbury's tears and entreaties, they rapidly dispersed. The news which that brave commander had to give Richard when he inquired for his army is well expressed in the words of our national dramatist:—

> One day too late, I fear, my noble lord,
> Hath clouded all thy happy days on earth.
> Oh, call back yesterday, bid time return,
> And thou shalt have twelve thousand fighting men:
> To-day, to-day, unhappy day, too late,
> O'erthrows thy joys, friends, fortune, and thy state.
> For all the Welshmen, hearing thou wert dead,
> Are gone to Bolingbroke, dispersed, and fled.

In this deplorable situation the mind of the king seems to have lost all its wonted courage. He sent his two half-brothers, the dukes of Surrey and Exeter, to his haughty rival to ask what were his intentions. They could very easily be divined. Richard was wholly in his power, wholly deserted, and it was not in the nature of Bolingbroke to let pass so tempting an opportunity of seizing a crown. While the two emissaries went on their unpromising mission, the king and Salisbury examined the castles of Beaumaris and Carnarvon, but, finding only bare walls, they returned dejected to Conway.

Meantime Surrey and Exeter were admitted to the presence of Lancaster at Chester, who at once detained them as prisoners. Here was already the traitor Albemarle, who was so gay that he could afford to taunt the fallen kinsmen of the king.

There have been various relations of the capture of Richard, but this is that which is left by two of his own suite, and may be found in the Archæologia.

Lancaster having carefully informed himself of the retreat of the king, and that he had a considerable treasure deposited in the strong castle of Holt, immediately despatched a body of troops to capture the money, and another of four hundred men-at-arms and a thousand archers, under the duke of Northumberland, to secure the king. Northumberland marched into Flint, and thence to Rhuddlan Castle, and about five miles beyond the latter place left his detachment concealed behind a rock. He then rode forward with only four attendants to Conway, where he was readily admitted to the presence of the king, who was in the highest anxiety regarding his brothers and the fate of their mission. The duke replied that his brothers were quite well at Chester, and that he was himself despatched with a letter to his grace by the duke of Exeter. In the letter Exeter was instructed to say that Richard might put full confidence in the offers made by Northumberland. These were that the said dukes, Exeter and Surrey, the earl of Salisbury, the bishop of Carlisle, and Maudelain, the king's chaplain, should take their trials for having advised the murder of Gloucester; that Lancaster should be made justiciary of the kingdom, as his ancestors had been before him; and, these terms being conceded, the duke would wait on the king at Flint, to implore pardon, and accompany him to London.

Richard, after consulting his friends, consented to the terms, but secretly assured his adherents implicated that he would stand by them steadfastly on their trial, and would take the first opportunity to be avenged on his and their enemies; saying he would flay some of them alive if he could, and that all the gold on earth should not induce him to spare them. He insisted on Northumberland swearing on behalf of Lancaster to the strict observance of the articles, and, "like Judas," says the writer of the account, "he perjured himself on the body of our Lord;" that is, he swore on the host.

Northumberland set out, Richard reminding him of his oath, and telling him he relied upon him. He soon followed with a small company of friends and servants. On coming to a turn of the road, Richard exclaimed, "God of Paradise, assist me! I am betrayed! Do you not see pennons and banners in the valley?" Northumberland with eleven others just then came up, and pretended to be ignorant of any armed force near. "Earl of Northumberland!" said Richard, "if I thought you capable of betraying me, it is not too late to return!"

"You cannot return," said Northumberland, seizing Richard's bridle; "I have promised to conduct you to the duke of Lancaster." A body of lancers and archers came hastening up, and Richard seeing all hope of escape gone by, exclaimed, "May the God on whom you laid your hand reward you and your accomplices at the last day!"

They reached Flint Castle that evening, where Richard, when left alone with his friends, vented the bitterness of his regret that he had repeatedly spared Lancaster, when he so carefully destroyed other, and far less dangerous men. "Fool that I was!" he exclaimed; "thrice did I save the life of this Henry of Lancaster. Once my dear uncle, his father, on whom the Lord have mercy, would have put him to death for his treason and villainy. God of Paradise! I rode all night to save him, and his father delivered him to me to do with him as I pleased. How true is the saying, that we have no greater enemy than the man whom we have preserved from the gallows! Another time he drew his sword on me, in the chamber of the queen on whom God have mercy! He was also the accomplice of the duke of Gloucester and the earl of Arundel; he consented to my murder, to that of his father, and of all my council. By St. John, I forgave him all; nor would I believe his father, who more than once pronounced him deserving of death."

The next morning the fallen king, after a sleepless night, ascended the tower of the castle, and looked out anxiously for the approach of Lancaster, who had agreed to meet him there; and anon he saw him coming, at the head of eighty thousand men. This vast army came winding along the strand to the castle, which it surrounded, and Richard beheld himself a captive in the midst of his own subjects. At this sight and the reflections it occasioned the once

arbitrary monarch shuddered, and bewailed his fate. He cursed Northumberland in impotent rage, but was soon called to meet archbishop Arundel, himself a rebel returned, without asking leave, from banishment, the traitor duke of Albemarle, and the earl of Worcester. They knelt in pretended homage, and Richard held a long conversation with Arundel. When they were gone Richard again ascended to the tower, gazed on the great host of his revolted subjects, and feeling a dire foreboding of his fate, said, "Good Lord God! I commend myself into thy holy keeping, and cry thee mercy that thou wouldst pardon all my sins. If they put me to death, I will take it patiently, as thou didst for us all."

At dinner there were only his few remaining adherents, and since they were all companions in misfortune, Richard would insist on their sitting down with him. While at their meal persons unknown came into the hall and insulted and menaced him; and no sooner did he rise than he was summoned into the court to meet Lancaster.

The duke advanced to the king clad in complete armour, but without helmet, and, bending his knee, did obeisance with his cap in his hand. "Fair cousin of Lancaster," said Richard, uncovering, "you are right welcome." "My lord," replied Lancaster, "I am come somewhat before my time, but I will show you the reason. Your people complain that for the space of twenty or two-and-twenty years you have ruled them rigorously; but, if it please God, I will help you to rule them better." The humbled monarch replied, "Fair cousin, since it pleaseth you, it pleaseth us well."

The king's horses were ordered, and they set forward at once for Chester, amid a flourish of trumpets, Richard and the earl of Salisbury riding on tired and wretched animals. The duke came behind. At Chester, after issuing writs in the king's name for a meeting of parliament, Lancaster dismissed a great part of his army, and set out for London. At Lichfield Richard slipped unperceived out of his window, but was retaken in the court, and was ever afterwards strictly guarded. On arriving at London Richard was sent to Westminster, and thence to the Tower, while the hypocritical Lancaster went in solemn state to St. Paul's, and pretended to weep awhile at the tomb of his father, while in his heart he was congratulating himself on his successful treason. We have two conflicting statements of the manner of Richard's entrance into London. Froissart says that he was conducted secretly to the Tower for fear of the Londoners, who had a great hatred of him; but other accounts accord with that of Shakespeare, copied no doubt from the chronicles, which make Lancaster conduct him thither in triumph.

York. Then, as I said, the duke, great Bolingbroke,
Mounted upon a hot and fiery steed,
Which his aspiring rider seemed to know,
With slow but stately pace kept on his course,
While all tongues cried—"God save thee, Bolingbroke!"
You would have thought the very windows spake,
So many greedy looks of young and old
Through casements darted their desiring eyes
Upon his visage; and that all the walls
With painted imagery had said at once—
"Jesu preserve thee! welcome Bolingbroke!"
While he, from one side to the other turning,
Bareheaded, lower than his proud steed's neck,
Bespoke them thus—"I thank you, countrymen."
And thus still doing, thus he passed along.

Duchess. Alas, poor Richard! where rides he the while?

York. As in a theatre the eyes of men,
After a well-graced actor leaves the stage
Are idly bent on him that enters next,
Thinking his prattle to be tedious;
Even so, or with much more contempt, men's eyes
Did scowl on Richard; no man cried "God save him!"
No joyful tongue gave him his welcome home,
But dust was thrown upon his sacred head.

The people are said to have cursed him as he went along, and cried "bastard," which alluded to a common scandal amongst the Londoners, and which Froissart makes Lancaster personally upbraid Richard with, that he was not really the son of the Black Prince, but of a young canon or priest at Bordeaux. This was a very probable aspersion of Lancaster, because it rendered Richard a usurper, and took away his own treason. So completely was Richard deserted, that Froissart says a favourite greyhound, which he had, called Mathe, and which would never notice any one else, while Lancaster spoke with Richard in the castle court at Flint, suddenly left Richard, went and fawned on Lancaster, and ever afterwards followed him.

According to the same authority, we are told that Lancaster sent to the queen at Leeds Castle in Kent, and had the Lady Courci sent away to France, and allowed no French man or woman to remain in her service, but all English, and newly placed about her, so that there should be no talk of, or communication with, the king. "And in all this, the Londoners," he says, "rejoiced; only they were discontented that Richard was kept out of their sight and reach." For, says he, "behold the opinion of the common people when they be up against their prince or lord, and especially in England. Among them there is no remedy, for they are the most dangerous people in the world, and most outrageous if they be up, and especially Londoners."

Parliament met on the 29th of September to consider of the course to be adopted; in other words, to carry out the will of Lancaster and depose Richard. It was clear that Richard had entirely lost the affections of the people. They would never again receive him. His utter want of regard for them; his continual exactions to waste their means on unworthy favourites; the contempt he had all along expressed for the people, and his severe treatment of them; his breach of all his oaths as a king; his attempts to make himself absolute, and to rule by a junto, had made him disliked and despised through the whole realm, but especially in the metropolis. It is equally true that Lancaster was their favourite, and that they would willingly accept him as king; and had he been content to accept the crown as the popular gift, he would have had the highest possible title to it, far beyond any hereditary plea. In fact, he would have occupied the position since assumed by William III., who refused to reign in right of his wife, and was eventually elected by the nation. But Lancaster disdained that only valid ground of right, and determined to claim it by descent. Than this there could be nothing more palpably untenable, for the earl of March, the grand-son of Lionel, duke of Clarence, the third son of Edward III., was the true heir. By standing on the empty claim of descent instead of the free election of the people, he was and remained an arrant usurper.

As soon as Lancaster began to allow it to be known that he did not really content himself with being the reformer of the state, but aspired to the crown, some of his chief supporters fell away; and amongst them the earl of Northumberland, who had been made to assure Richard of his

just treatment. This was a main reason for dismissing a great host of his army at Chester, including the followers of Northumberland.

The remaining transactions of this reign come to us chiefly through the rolls of parliament, penned under the direct influence of Lancaster, and therefore are probably coloured as much as possible to favour his own views, and cover his notorious usurpation. A deputation of prelates, barons, knights, and lawyers waited on Richard in the Tower, and received from him his resignation, which he was then said to have promised at Conway, but which we know was not the fact. He was also in that document, signed by him and presented by the deputies to parliament, made to name, by his own preference, Lancaster as his successor. Of course all this he was obliged to say.

The next day this act of resignation was read in full parliament, and there unanimously accepted, and received had been, as asserted, voluntary in favour of Lancaster, was as ungracious as it was uncalled for. The chief justice, Sir William Thirning, was deputed to notify this decision of parliament to the captive.

Lancaster, who had taken his seat during these proceedings near the throne, then rising and crossing himself on the forehead and breast, pronounced the following words:—"In the name of Fadher, Son, and Holy Ghost, I, Henry of Lancaster, challenge this rewme of Ynglonde and the crowne, with all the members and appurtenances, als I that am descendit be ryght lyne of the blode, cumyng fra the gude lord king Henry Thirde, and throghe that ryght that God of his grace hath sent me, with help of my kyn and of my frendes to recover it; the whiche rewme was in poynt to be ondone for defaut of governance, and undoying of the gude lawes."

This speech was one of those which have a sound of

Pontefract Castle.

by the people with shouts of applause. If Richard had thus voluntarily abdicated, there could be no necessity for what immediately followed: a series of thirty-three articles of impeachment in order to his deposition. The chief charges contained in these were his violation of his coronation oath, his murder of the duke of Gloucester, and his despotic and unconstitutional conduct. Of course there was no opposition; but Merks, the bishop of Carlisle, who had remained faithful to Richard, and continued with him to the last, stood boldly forward and claimed for him the right to be confronted with his accusers, and that parliament should have the opportunity of judging whether his resignation were voluntary or not. Nothing could be more reasonable, but nothing more inconvenient where all was settled beforehand to one end; and the only answer which the high-minded prelate received was his immediate arrest by Lancaster, and consignment to the abbey of St. Alban's.

Richard was then formally deposed, with an acrimony of accusation which, to say the least, if his resignation reason to the ear, but will not bear a moment's examination. True, he was descended from Henry III., like Edward III. and Richard, but not in the true line; that being, as we have stated, the line of Lionel, and Henry being now not only the usurper of Richard's throne, but of the earl of March's reversion.

But the pretence was enough, and more than enough for all who heard it. They knew it was all empty sound, and the real reasons for assent lay in Lancaster's will, backed by a powerful army and a willing people.

Henry, as proof of Richard's having resigned all his rights into his hands, produced the ring and seal. The archbishop of Canterbury, Arundel, his late fellow-exile, now took him by the hand and led him to the throne. He knelt for a short time on the steps in prayer, or affected prayer; for Lancaster, amid all his grasping at his neighbour's goods, was especially careful to do outward homage to the great Being who had said, "Thou shall not covet." On arising, the two archbishops placed him on the throne; and

as soon as the acclamations ceased, the primate made a short sermon, choosing his text, with the finished tact of a priestly courtier, from 1 Samuel ix. 17: — "Behold the man whom I spoke to thee of; this same shall reign over my people;" and the sermon was worthy of the text.

Then the new king, fearful that his bold claims to the right of conquest might alarm some of his hearers, stood up, and said, as reported by old Knyghton:—"Siris, I thank God and zou, spiritual and temporal, and all the astates of the land, and do zow to wyte, it is naght my will that no man thynk that be way of conquest I wold disherit any man of his heritage, franches, or other rights that hym oght to have, no put hym out of that he has, and has had by the gude lawes and custumes of the rewme, except those persons that has been agan the gude purpose, and the commune profyt of the rewme."

Thus ended the reign of Richard II., and as with it ended also the authority of parliament and the ministers of the crown, Lancaster immediately summoned the parliament to meet again in six days, appointed new officers, and having received their oaths, retired to the royal palace.

We have sufficiently described the person and character of this unfortunate king—unfortunate in his education, which, by inspiring him with despotic principles, originated his fall. Richard was not destitute of talent or courage; he was destitute of the perception of the necessity of ruling for the good of his people. The renown and popularity of his immediate ancestors were his snare. They made him presume on the favour of the people without exerting any means to insure its continuance; and the history of his reign is one of the most important in all our annals, because it is a foreshadowing of future events, in more enlightened and constitutional times. It was the popular will which as completely set aside Richard as it did Charles Stuart in after years. Lancaster was the means; but without the favour of the people he never could have risen, as with it Richard never could have fallen. Lancaster aspired only to that which he saw placed within his reach by the public acquiescence; and he only pushed down a figure beneath which the pedestal of the people's attachment was already in decay.

The history of the progress of parliamentary power in this reign is most important. We find parliament at various times asserting its authority, calling on the crown to reform its household, its courts of law, to restrain its expenditure, and dismiss its servants. By its means the duke of Gloucester obtained his commission to regulate the administration, and to impeach the prime minister, the earl of Suffolk, De la Pole; and though, during the latter years of his reign, parliament, as in our time, became corrupt and subservient, yet the people, assuming the exercise of those powers which their delegates had basely surrendered, punished and deposed the monarch whom they could not reform. So self-evident is this fact, that some of our most celebrated legal historians contend that the duke of Lancaster cannot properly be called a usurper, seeing that he was undoubtedly the elect of the nation.

Richard was dethroned in the twenty-third year of his reign, and the thirty-fourth of his age. Had he received a judicious education, calling out his better qualities—for he had them—he might have made a prosperous and distinguished king; or had his "good queen Anne" lived, whose daily influence was a sound moral education, his unquestionable spirit and ability would have produced the same result. He was an affectionate husband, a generous master, and a faithful friend. The great foible of his character, his attachment to his favourites, was merely a misdirection of amiable impulses. But evil counsellors led him to neglect the better and indulge the worst tendencies of his nature, which was quick to resent, and ingenious to devise vengeance. He was taught to despise the people, and, trampling on their rights and happiness, he most righteously forfeited his own.

His last dark days properly belong to the reign of his rival and destroyer, but will most effectually be finished here. Henry IV. lost no time in submitting to the lords the question what should be done with the late monarch, whose life, he declared, he was at all events resolved to preserve. The lords recommended perpetual confinement in some castle, where none of his former adherents could obtain access to him. This advice was acted upon, as there can be little doubt that it was first suggested by Henry. Richard disappeared, and no one knew anything of his place of detention. The king of France threatened war on behalf of the rights of his daughter Isabella and his son-in-law the deposed king. To avert this storm Henry proposed to make various alliances between the two royal families, including the marriage of the prince of Wales to a daughter of Charles. But the king of France rejected the proposal, declaring that he knew no king of England but Richard. The French king, however, received intelligence that Richard was dead, and therefore he avowedly ceased to prosecute his claims, but confined himself to those of his daughter, demanding that she should be restored to him, with her jewels and her dowry, according to the marriage settlement. Charles afterwards consented to receive her with her jewels only, counter claims being set up against the dowry.

From the moment, however, that the public statement of Richard's death was made by the king of France, the nation became inquisitive, and it was not long before the dead body of the deposed monarch was brought up from Pontefract Castle and shown publicly in St. Paul's for two days, where twenty thousand people are said to have gone to see it. Only the face was uncovered, and that was wonderfully emaciated. Various were the rumours of the mode of his death on all these occasions, but, as in the case of Richard's victim, the duke of Gloucester, nothing certain ever transpired. One story was that Sir Piers Exton, with seven other assassins, entered his cell to despatch him, when Richard, aware of their purpose, snatched an axe from one of them, and felled him and several of his fellows to the earth; but that Exton, getting behind him, prostrated him with one blow, and then slew him. Another story was that he was starved to death; and there were not wanting rumours that he had escaped, and lived many years in the guise of an ordinary man. But Henry Bolingbroke may be safely trusted to secure his dangerous captive. The features of Richard were too well known to thousands in London to be mistaken for those of one Maudelain, whose body, it was pretended, had been substituted for Richard's. There can be no doubt but that he died a secret and violent death: the mode of that death must for ever remain a mystery.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

THE PROGRESS OF THE NATION.

FORMATION OF THE ENGLISH PEOPLE.

We have already stated our views of the true nature of human history. We do not believe it to consist merely or chiefly in the records of the wars and butcheries which have disgraced the earth. These may have built up some nations and pulled down others, but, in the aggregate, they have retarded the progress of the race, they have distorted the intellectual vision of mankind, lowered and vitiated the standard of morals, and, by engrossing the energies of the ablest men in the pursuit of mutual destruction, have necessarily diverted them from the pursuit of all those arts which grace and that knowledge which elevates society. We believe that historians, by devoting nearly all their faculties, their passions, and their lives, their eloquence, their learning, and their logic, to the martial rather than the social history of their respective countries, have done more than all other men put together to perpetuate the false taste for sanguinary fame; and, consequently, to curse their fellow-men with a growth of warriors rather than of the true heroes of our race—those who combat errors, and who establish in our midst the triumphs of mind. Had historians placed these in the foremost ranks, and spoken of the mere physical warriors in more moderate and just terms, the world would have presented to-day a very different aspect; and, instead of Europe armed to the teeth, not so much to defend as to offend the respective peoples, and with its myriads groaning under a leaden despotism which is oppressing not only its limbs but its brain, we should have already advanced far beyond the railway and the electric telegraph, into the regions of beneficent science, and seen nations exchanging all the blessings of mutual discoveries and mutual good-will, instead of the deadly point of the bayonet and the muzzle of the gun. We now, therefore, pause in the narrative of that heritage of national contentions which our predecessors have left us, to glean up as we may a few traces of the real history of England; that is, of its religious, moral, and artistic progress during the interval between the Norman period and the present. And, first, let us say a word of the nation whose history we are tracing, as it may help the imagination of the reader to comprehend the greatness of the subject. We may suspect, when we ourselves pronounce our own people the first and foremost in the world, that national vanity may influence the judgment. But we will quote the opinion of a distinguished writer of our rival, France, recently given, who cannot be supposed guilty of such bias. M. Gouraud, in his "*Histoire des Causes de la Grandeur de l'Angleterre*," says:—

"What a nation! Foremost in intelligence, and in the application of the useful arts, she disputes the palm in other regions of activity, and carries it in some. Is this all? No. Add that this great people is free! Free! when the rest of mankind, while pretending to rival them, can only move with anarchy, or rest in servitude. Free! that is, equally capable of discussing and respecting their laws. Free! that is, wise enough to govern themselves for the direction of their own affairs. Other mercantile nations before England have been, or believed themselves to be free. But what was the liberty of Carthage, of Venice, or even Amsterdam, beside that of London? A word beside a reality! And then England, to the imposing material and intellectual spectacle which she offers to the world, may add a third still more striking, and undoubtedly the fairest that can be seen under the heavens,—namely, the moral spectacle of a nation that depends upon herself alone. To have a complete idea, however, of the unprecedented grandeur of this nation, we must also take into consideration that, unlike her predecessors in commerce, who never held more than the most limited moral influence over the nations with which they came in contact, she acts more than any other on the destinies, the mind, and the manners of the rest of the world. Already she is the model school for the agriculturists, the manufacturers, the navigators, and the merchants of the universe.

"Then, inasmuch as by reason of her immense territorial possessions, there is no language so widely spread as hers, she exercises an incalculable influence over the human mind. There are only a few cultivated spirits who, beyond the frontiers of their respective countries, read Dante or Molière, while Shakespeare has readers in every latitude of the globe. And then, too, when the free press or the free tribune of London expresses a sentiment, an idea, or a vow, this sentiment, this vow, this idea, makes the tour of the world. When Junius writes, or Pitt speaks, the universe reads and listens. Thanks, in short, may be given to the justice of Providence, that the people to whom this immense and redoubtable empire has been accorded, can use it only to elevate human intelligence and human dignity: for their language, even in the greatest excess of passion, is always the manly and vivifying utterance of free men. Such is the fine spectacle which the British empire offers to our generation."

The freedom for which M. Gouraud give us credit, however great in comparison with that of any other nation of Europe, requires from us some modification. We have failed to maintain the independence of the noblest institution which our ancestors have bequeathed us, and that for which they struggled, bled, and died,—the House of Commons. We have suffered the aristocratic influence to pervade and enfeeble it; but nothing can tend so much to invigorate us as the contemplation of the national history, in which the labours and sufferings of our forefathers to build up this grand palladium of our liberties are recorded.

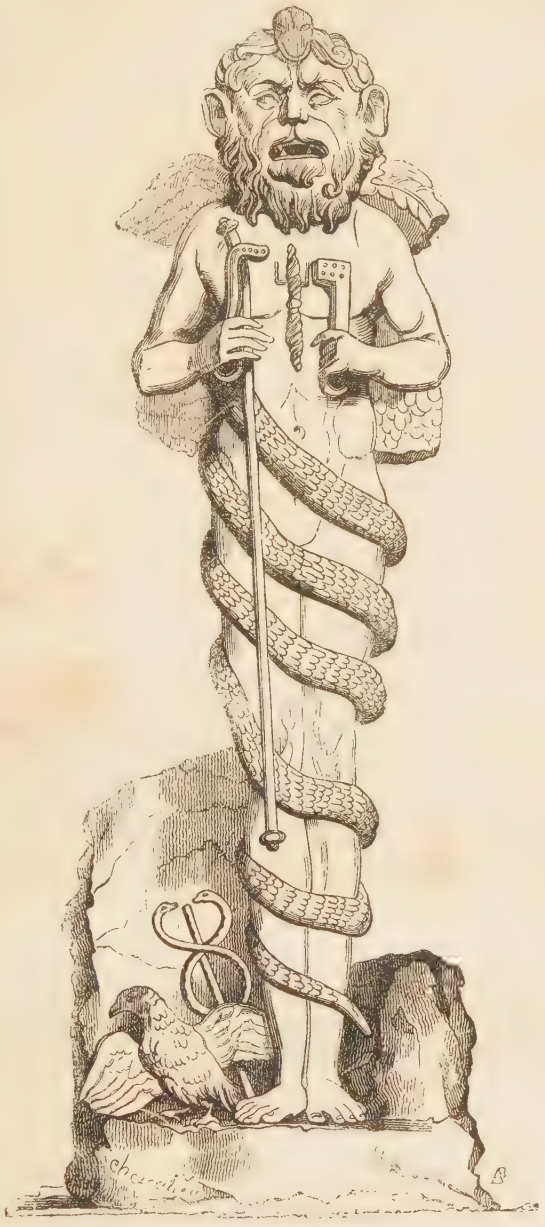
In reviewing the constitutional progress during the period we have passed through in the late reigns, we cannot do better than commence with an inquiry into the origin and composition of the English people, which, according to our French neighbour, has grown to such greatness, and to the exercise of so transcendent an influence on human destiny. And here we may again avail ourselves of the striking description of that origin given by the same writer:—

"About a century after the invasion of William, when the violence of the first years after the Conquest had begun to give way before a milder *régime*, it may be said that the great work of the formation of the English nation was accomplished. It was then that the distinct type of a people appeared, which has never had its like in any age of history, and the powerful originality of which eight centuries have only served to deepen. Then appeared a race of men whose appearance, manners, and mind have remained so marvellously distinct from the rest of the human family,

that at the present time an individual of it, met under any latitude, is recognised before he has spoken; in short, then appeared the English people.

"How admirable are the care, the energy, and the perseverance with which nature works, through centuries, at the formation of the nations which she has destined to civilise certain territories! We have here an example with which it is impossible not to be struck. In the designs of God, in the progress of the human race, it is written that England shall play a great part in the development of Western civilisation. For this purpose a people must be formed—I was going to say, must be wrought — whose powerful constitution shall be capable of fulfilling the great task. What takes place? The tribes who were indigenous to these islands being too feeble for such a destiny, are conquered, driven away, or destroyed. Saxons replace them. These Saxons being found insufficient, in their turn are invaded by the Danes. They fight with each other at first, and then melt into a common race. But even this fusion, not giving a perfectly satisfactory result, the Normans arrive, whose accession realises at last the type of the people so long sought after and expected.

"All this takes up an immense length of time, brings about terrible calamities, and necessitates gigantic efforts; but nothing stops, nothing moves, nothing casts down the indomitable and pitiless energy of Nature's work. She labours in the moral as in the physical world. See, in the depths of the earth, or in the caves of the ocean, how rich substances — gold, the diamond, the pearl — are elaborated! The forces here at work, in analyses, transformations, and experiments, and the time expended, are incalculable. And so in the moral world, when Nature has something rare to produce, she exhibits the like perseverance and insensibility, the like exclusive determination to her end. She acted in this way in the formation of the English nation. She counted neither sacrifices, revolutions, nor centuries, because, in this instance—and succeeding ages were destined to prove it—she was making a diamond."



A Scandinavian God.

In this statement the author has made one grand omission—the Roman element. After the British natives—no despicable race, as their resistance to Cæsar demonstrated—there came five hundred years of Roman life in England. Thus, the splendid organisation of four great races, the aboriginal, the Roman, the Scandinavian, and the Norman, were combined for the production of the English race; and in that race all the prominent characteristics are blended, and yet distinctly marked. In the native British there prevailed at least bravery and love of freedom; in the Roman, a sublime firmness and fortitude of character, with a large spirit of conquest and of agricultural colonisation. In the Scandinavian—that is, the mixture of Norwegian, Swedish, Danish, and old Saxon; the latter not a German, but a Gothic people, living in the modern Sleswick, and part of the great maritime race which stretches along Europe's western shores from Norway to Belgium—we received a spirit of wonderful hardihood, a spirit of conquest, a spirit of naval adventure and domination, a spirit of settlement in vast and varied countries, and a lofty love of the sublime and wonderful in literature. In the Norman, which was but the Norwegian engrafted on the Celtic blood, we derived a mixture of bravery and polish, and a race of rulers who, spite of all our love of independence, sway us and coerce us to the present hour.

Through all this the Scandinavian, or — to use a more familiar term, the Anglo-Saxon — maintained its predominance. The Norman conquest gave us rulers, but not a people. The Saxon nobles gave way or amalgamated with the Norman blood, but the people were and remained an Anglo-Roman-and-Saxon people. Nothing is a more complete proof of this than the language, which in the days of the most regnant Norman dynasty remained Anglo-Saxon, and remains so still. Trench, in his analysis of our modern English, shows that, if we divided it into a hundred parts, sixty would be Saxon, thirty Latin, five Greek, and only five a combination of other languages, including Norman-French and French. This view of the question is, again,

supported by Sir Henry Ellis's analysis of Domesday Book, which shows that at a time when the whole male population of the kingdom included in the survey was only two hundred and eighty-three thousand, the "mesne tenants," or possessors of land, consisted of only one thousand four hundred tenants in capite, of whom the majority were Normans, while seven thousand eight hundred and seventy-one lesser proprietors were principally Saxon.

Thus, then, the English nation may be said to be thoroughly amalgamated and completed within a hundred years of the Conquest. The upper classes spoke and read Norman-French, but the people still continued to speak Anglo-Saxon; and, notwithstanding the cruel and contemptuous manner in which they were treated by their Norman lords, they never at any period failed to display the sturdiness of their character. They rose again and again in resistance to the Norman yoke. From the death of the Conqueror to the era of Magna Charta was only a hundred and twenty-eight years: a plain proof of the rapid growth of the English spirit in the nation. This great triumph of independence has been most industriously, and without a single exception, attributed by our historians to the patriotism of the barons; while the very facts which they record incontestibly show that it was a triumph of the people. We hear constantly of the barons at Runnymede; of the barons and Magna Charta; as if the barons had won this great document of our freedom. Now nothing is more conspicuous in the history of those times than that, though the barons induced John to sign Magna Charta at Runnymede, he immediately repudiated it. The barons took up arms to compel him to restore it; but what was the result? They were beaten, and never could, and never did, recover the charter from John.

These facts are of so much importance for the right understanding all that comes after of English history, that we shall save ourselves much trouble, and explode for ever the greatest fiction of our historians, by briefly reviewing the realities of the case.

The charter of John was not the first English charter by any means; and Lingard has very justly observed that, had not John taken arms to get rid of it, we should have heard as little of it as of former ones. Henry I., Stephen, and Henry II. all granted charters, to say nothing of those of Canute and Edward the Confessor; and so far was Magna Charta from extending the liberty secured by those charters, that Lyttleton, the great commentator on our laws, declares the charter of Henry I. was, in some respects, more favourable to liberty than Magna Charta itself. Be that as it may, Magna Charta notoriously originated, not with the barons, but with Stephen Langton, archbishop of Canterbury. By him it was drawn up in terse and excellent Latin, and bears all the marks, not of the rude composition of feudal barons, but of the great churchman, who at that period was also the great lawyer. Langton was the soul of the whole opposition. He it was who convoked the barons, and read to them the charter of Henry I., and called upon them to compel John to submit to a new one. Langton was really the author, and to the very end he was the great champion of the charter; yet who bestows a word of praise on Langton? No; it is the barons, and still the barons.

Well, Langton roused them to opposition. The crisis was most auspicious. The people hated John, all men hated him; and the church had placed him under the ban. The barons had lately joined in the infamous act of making over the country to the pope, and they were now as ready to join in humbling John.

John, alarmed, humbly besought the church, as its vassal, to aid him, and the interdict was removed; nay, it was menaced against all who should oppose John. But Langton, spite of the pope, still pressed on his great object. The barons fought, and were defeated. Their first martial enterprise, the siege of the castle of Northampton, was an utter failure. They saw that without the people they could do nothing. But Bedford and London declared for them, and they were able to bring John to Runnymede. Without the people the barons never could have come there. Church, barons, people—all had combined to bring the tyrant to submission; but the people had been the conquering and deciding power.

Well, the charter was signed, but it was not won. John immediately repudiated it, and the barons rose again in arms to enforce it. They never did and never could enforce it. It was become, so far as they were concerned, a mere bit of waste parchment. It was of no more value or validity than any of the charters which had preceded it. It was because those charters had been broken that this had been demanded. To become the law of the land its title must be fought out. Ink was not strong enough; it must be blood.

John put down the barons. He raged like a man insane; and we believe that was the secret of his extraordinary and violent character; we believe he was actually insane. He defeated the barons everywhere, except in London, and there the Londoners supported them. But these wonderful barons, the vaunted authors of the charter, finding that they could not prevail against John, now perpetrated the most traitorous act which has disgraced the annals of England. They offered the crown of England to the son of Louis, king of France, on condition that he brought over an army to rescue them and their estates from the tyrant who had completely foiled them. Louis came over most gladly, and, had he succeeded, England would have become a dependency of France! and that we should have owed to the barons! Had he succeeded, we should have had a French Conquest as well as a Norman Conquest, and that would have been the work of the so-belauded barons of Runnymede! But to the day of John's death neither the barons nor the French prince could conquer him. So completely did the barons despair of success, that the earl of Salisbury, William Marshall, Walter Beaumont, and other barons, abandoned Louis of France and submitted to John; nay, the chroniclers assert that in his last moments John received letters from forty of the revolted barons, offering to return to his allegiance, and, of course, to abandon the charter.

So stood affairs at the death of John—he never restored the charter. At this time Louis and the barons not only held London and the south of England, but were powerfully supported in the north by the king of Scots, and in the west by the prince of the Welsh. The king was but a boy of ten years of age, and, of course, he was made by his guardian, the earl of Pembroke, to promise charters of anything. A civil war was now become the consequence of the rash act of the barons, and they and their adopted French king stood arrayed against the English king and

the people. Pembroke, whom we believe to have been a good patriot, was disposed to make a truce, and thus to draw the barons from Louis. But the people cared for neither truce, barons, nor Frenchmen. The sailors under the brave Hubert de Burgh, the constable of Dover, and the gallant archers of England, under William de Collingham, went hand and heart to work; and so well did they play their part, that in one single year they had beaten the French and their baronial allies on all hands, and expelled Louis and the Frenchmen from the kingdom. From Collingham's archers Louis himself only escaped by flying on board his ships; and on his return with fresh forces from France the sailors cut off and captured many of his ships, the bowmen drove the French out of London, and the mariners under De Burgh completed the business by destroying the whole French fleet at the mouth of the Thames with the exception of fifteen vessels.

King Henry III. was firmly set upon the throne, and then a charter was obtained from him, not by the barons, but by the whole people of the realm in parliament assembled. This is the charter which Hallam, and indeed all the legal historians, declare is the law of the land, John's charter never having been established. And now was seen, by the important additions made to this charter, the source from which it had proceeded. Its benefit was extended to Ireland: a new clause was added, ordering the destruction of every castle built or rebuilt since the commencement of the wars of John and his barons. All the forests which had been enclosed since the reign of Henry II. were thrown open, and the deadly forest laws which ordered a man's eyes to be put out for stealing a deer were abolished or reduced to mildness by a separate charter, called the Charter of the Forests.

Such is the history of Magna Charta. "It was not," says Henry, "till after a very long and bloody struggle that *the people of England* obtained the peaceable enjoyment of it." Yet historians still go on talking of the barons at Runnymede, and the barons and Magna Charta. Let us suppose a reverse of the story. That the people had been defeated in endeavouring to obtain a charter. That they had, when foiled, called in the son and heir of the French king, and offered him the crown, and that the patriotic barons had risen and driven away both French king and English people. What a glorification there would have been of the barons; what eternal infamy cast on the people! Such is the manner in which history is written, with all the facts before our faces in the pages of Carte, Matthew of Paris, Rymer, Knyghton, &c. There is no event in our annals so luminously clear as that the barons *lost* instead of *won* the Great Charter for us; that they would and did, as far as in them lay, traitorously make over their country to France; and that the people stepped in and prevented the mischief. The Great Charter is, therefore, wholly the work of the people of England; and we should ever reflect with pride

Shipping of the year 1269.

that it was our ancestors, and not the barons; our ancestors, the brave bowmen whose descendants won the battles of Crecy, Poictiers, and Agincourt; the brave mariners whose sons have made the universal ocean the home of England's glory,—who especially fought out and established the charter of our liberties. And ever afterwards the people clung with firm hearts to their charter, and time after time, by their representatives in parliament, they compelled the proudest kings to ratify it afresh. When Edward I., flushed with the glory of his victories in Scotland, Wales, and France, endeavoured to introduce a new clause which would have undermined its very foundations, when the clergy had succumbed, and the nobles had retired sullenly to their estates, the brave citizens of London withstood the formidable monarch to his face, and compelled him to strike out the obnoxious clause.

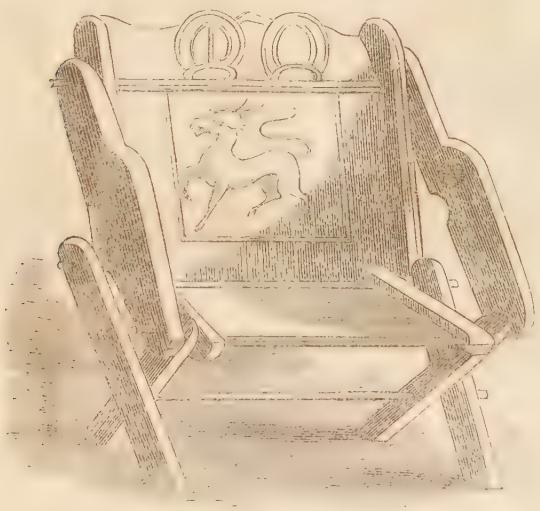
Thus completely was the English race developed within less than a century and a half of the Conquest, and thus had they won that great triumph which has placed this country on a basis of freedom so far beyond every other nation in Europe.

Let us now take a brief survey of the progress of

THE CONSTITUTION AND THE LAWS

since that period. In narrating the events of the different reigns we have already mentioned many of them, and may therefore content ourselves with a brief review.

The privileges confirmed by Magna Charta to the various classes of English subjects may be divided into four sections. 1. Those to the church. 2. Those to the barons and knights who held *in capite*, or directly from the king. 3. Those to cities and the trading community. 4. To all free men; for of the villeins or slaves no party whatever took the least notice.



Prior of Southwick's Chair, 13th century.—From an Engraving by the Antiquarian Etching Club.

Along with archbishop Langton there were six other bishops who took an active part in procuring the charter, and, therefore, the church was certain to have its interests well cared for. Henry II., by the Constitutions of Clarendon, had endeavoured to reduce the clergy to the same jurisdiction as all other British subjects, and to cut off the pernicious power of a foreign potentate over his subjects, that is, of the pope. By these famous statutes all presentations to sees and livings were to be made by the king, or with his consent. All clergymen guilty of civil offences were to be tried in the civil courts. Suits between a clergyman and layman were to be tried in those courts. No clergyman was to leave the kingdom without the king's permission; a measure which precluded the common practice of clergymen going to Rome, and there getting causes determined in defiance of the king. Appeals from the archbishop were to be made not to the pope, but to the king. All prelates who held baronies were to do service like the lay barons, and all vacant sees and abbeys were to belong to the king.

Out of these famous laws arose the great struggle with Thomas à Becket and the clergy. Had Henry maintained these ordinances the English church would have become as independent of the papal chair as it did under Henry VIII. But the time was not come; and Henry was compelled to succumb in the contest. The provisions of the charter now repealed the Constitutions of Clarendon; the church was declared to be free; the clergy were at liberty to go out of the realm when they pleased; they and their benefices were removed from the civil jurisdiction, and they were not to be amerced according to their ecclesiastical benefices, but their secular estates.

The conditions of the feudal tenure were determined in favour of the barons, and their rates of payment fixed. The reliefs were sums paid when a baron, on coming at age, took up his right and paid his fee to the king. These reliefs had before been arbitrary, and had been in many cases monstrous. The king was the guardian of all his minor vassals, male and female, and had the management of their estates during their minority; a very profitable prerogative, and often farmed out to greedy and unprincipled men.

By the charter no waste was to be made on the estates, and no relief was to be paid on coming at age. The female wards had been compelled to marry whoever the king pleased, or to purchase exemption at a heavy cost. This was also a monstrous condition of things. Women were compelled to marry men that they loathed; they were, in fact, sold, for the crown made great profit of these marriages. Widows as well as maids were compelled to marry, whether they would or not. In king John's reign the countess of Warwick had been compelled to pay £1,000, equal at least to £15,000 of our money, that she might not be forced to marry till she pleased. These cases were constantly occurring. The charter put a restraint on this hideous abuse. No woman was to be married without the approbation of her relatives; no widow obliged to marry, or pay anything for her inheritance or property, nor to leave her husband's house for forty days after his death, within which time her dowry must be assigned.

Before the charter—for the conditions of the former charters had grown to be quite disregarded—the kings levied as much as they pleased for aids; that is, money to marry the king's eldest son or daughter, or ransom himself; for scutages, moneys paid in lieu of serving personally in the king's wars; and tallages, or subsidies levied at will. No man could call anything he had his own. The charter limited these exactions, and also those made by the great vassals on their tenants in turn.

Cities and towns were to enjoy all their charters and privileges. All weights and measures were to be regulated

by those of London. To restrain the abuses of purveyance three clauses were introduced. The cruelties and abuses of purveyance were amongst the most crying abominations of the feudal ages. Eadmer, who lived in the reign of Rufus, describes the atrocities of this practice; and that description would have held good for ages afterwards:—"Those who attended the court plundered and destroyed the whole country through which the king passed, without any control. Some of them were so intoxicated with malice that, when they could not consume all the provisions in the houses which they invaded, they either sold or burnt them. After having washed their horses' feet with the liquors they could not drink, they let them run out on the ground, or destroyed them in some other way. But the cruelties they committed on the masters of families, and the indecencies offered to their wives and daughters, were too shocking to be described."

These abominations the charter prohibited. No man's goods were to be taken without instant payment. His horses, carts, or wood were not to be taken at all without his consent.

No sheriff or bailiff of the crown was to hold pleas of the crown; that is, try for capital crimes, or inflict capital punishments,—a great defence against arbitrary acts of officials in local posts. No freeman was to be seized or imprisoned, much less condemned and punished, except by judgment of his peers; and justice was neither to be withheld nor delayed,—the last concession amounting to a writ of *habeas corpus*, and upon which that celebrated instrument of justice was founded.

Foreign merchants were to come and go at pleasure without molestation or fear, which they could not do before, being only allowed to remain in the country forty days, and to exhibit their goods at certain fairs. No judges were to be appointed except those learned in the law. The Court of Common Pleas was to be made stationary, and not to follow the king. The forest laws were ameliorated, and amercements, or penalties for legal offences, were limited. They were not to extend to a freeholder's freehold, a merchant's merchandise, or a husbandman's implements of husbandry.

Such were the chief provisions of Magna Charta; and the various constitutional struggles and enactments which we shall have to notice from that time to our own were to expound and establish its principles in judicial forms.

One of the first effects of the charter was to regulate the courts of law. These, however, were by no means greatly improved till the reign of Edward I. In speaking of the transactions of his reign we noted the great constitutional acts of that wise monarch. Though the Court of Common Pleas, in conformity with Magna Charta, had been fixed at Westminster, where it still continues, yet it was not completely severed from the Court of Exchequer till 1300, when Edward I. enacted that "No common pleas shall be henceforth holden in the Exchequer, contrary to the form of the Great Charter."

About the same time the Court of King's Bench was also separated from the Exchequer; and although those who were summoned to attend the court were commanded to appear "*coram ipso rege*," before the king himself, and notwithstanding this was strengthened by a special statute passed in 1300, that this court should always follow the king, yet the obvious necessities of its business soon fixed it, with some temporary exceptions, at Westminster. The separate establishment of these two courts very much reduced the business and impaired the dignity of the Court of Exchequer. The lord chancellor used to sit as one of the judges of the Exchequer after the separation of the two courts of Common Pleas and King's Bench; but the Court of Chancery was of much slower growth.

About the same time that these useful changes took place, justices of assize and *nisi prius* were appointed to go into every shire two or three times a year, for the more prompt administration of justice; and these judges were made justices of gaol-delivery at all places in their circuits.

All these improvements, however, not keeping down the host of thieves, murderers, and incendiaries, Edward I. appointed what he called justices of traile-baston, who proceeded to all parts, and exercised severe jurisdiction over such felons; and, still further to extend order and protection, he appointed justices of peace—officials of such indispensable and daily use, that we wonder how society was carried on before this era. At the same time Edward abolished the office of high justiciary, as conferring too much power on any subject. He, moreover, kept a sharp eye on the judges and justices, and punished them severely for neglect or violation of their duties. On his return from France in 1290 so many were the complaints of the rapacity and extortion of the judges, that he summoned a parliament expressly to call them to account, where all the judges, except two, were found guilty, and heavily fined. Sir Thomas Wayland, the chief justice, was banished, and his estates confiscated.

We have already stated, in speaking of Edward I.'s reign, that he was the first who regularly summoned the commons to parliament. Though this had been done in Henry's III.'s reign by the earl of Leicester, commonly called Leicester's parliament, yet it had fallen again into disuse, and it was only restored by Edward I. on the just ground that what concerned all ought to be approved by all. Yet it does not appear that the commons at this period possessed any separate house, though they occasionally retired and consulted on their own affairs. These were, chiefly, granting money and presenting petitions of grievances.

The clergy still formed an integral part of parliament; the prelates, abbots, and priors corresponding to the lords; the deans and archdeacons to the knights of shires, who were summoned by the bishop as the knights were by the sheriff; and the representatives of the ordinary clergy corresponded to the representatives of boroughs, and were called the spiritual commons. The clergy granted their money separate from the laity; and from this reign date the two houses of convocation. The judges, also, still sate in parliament.

The laws which Edward I. passed have drawn the highest praise from our greatest legal authorities. Coke calls him the English Justinian; and Sir Matthew Hale asserts that he made the scheme, mould, and model of the common law substantially what it still remains; that before his time it was very rude; and that since, the great fundamental principles of common law, as it relates to justice between man and man, are very much what he made and left them. By his wise statutes he enforced the administration of justice, set bounds to the power of the pope by the famous statute of provisors, to that of the clergy and the spiritual

courts, being the first to pass a statute of mortmain; restrained the crown from imposing taxes without consent of parliament; regulated and strengthened the internal police of the country; and greatly fostered trade by protecting and encouraging both foreign and English merchants. In his reign the famous mercantile society called the "Merchant Adventurers" was established to promote woollen manufactures; and foreign merchants were allowed trial by jury, the jury consisting half of foreigners; and they had a justiciary in London for their protection, evidently the origin of consuls.

In all that related to his own prerogative, however, Edward was very arbitrary, continually breaking the charter, exercising purveyances, and exacting taxes without consent of parliament; and one of the worst evils of his reign was his empowering the nobles to entail their estates by a direct statute which has given the aristocracy of to-day its overwhelming and dangerous influence. He passed the famous statute, *De tallagio cum concidendo*, prohibiting the levy of tallages, or arbitrary imposition; but nobody paid less attention to the statute than himself.

The unsettled reign of Edward II. left the constitution pretty much as it found it; but in the reign of Edward III. great progress was made. Edward III. had incessant demands for money to carry on his wars in Scotland and France; and, therefore, he was in the constant habit of calling together his parliament. There remain no fewer than seventy writs of summons to parliaments and great councils issued during his reign. The difference between parliaments and great councils at that time seems to be that in parliament he required the commons to grant taxes; in great councils only the barons and great officers to consult on matters in which money-raising was not concerned.

In Edward III.'s reign parliament resolved itself into three great elements, the lords, the commons, and the clergy. In the parliament which met in Westminster in 1339, the barons voted a tenth sheaf, fleece, and lamb; the knights objected to so large a contribution till they had consulted their constituents. This led to the knights of shires, who were representatives, meeting also with the commons, who were representatives, and thus the representative house became separated from the hereditary house. It required time to amalgamate the two classes of knights and citizens in one house; the knights, as belonging to the aristocracy, looking down on the citizens, and they in their turn having a very humble idea of themselves; but we shall see that all that gradually corrected itself. The clergy now regularly voted their funds in convocation, and no longer sat in the commons by their proxies. It does not appear exactly when the judges ceased to sit *ex-officio* in parliament,

Parliament assembled for the Deposition of Richard II. From the Harleian MSS. 1319.

but they had ceased to do so in Richard II.'s time. In the forty-sixth of Edward III., practising lawyers were excluded by statute from parliament, a position which they have since regained.

The knowledge of political economy possessed by parliament in this famous reign was lamentably low. The topographical knowledge of the commons was ludicrous. They granted the king, in 1371, £50,000, by a tax of 22s. 3d. on each parish, supposing the number of parishes to be about 45,000; but finding they were not one-fifth of that number, they had to alter the rate to £5 10s. per parish. But this was not a more amazing mistake than that of the English ambassador at Rome six years afterwards, who, finding that the pope had created Lewis of Spain prince of the *Fortunate Islands*, meaning the Canary Isles, immediately hurried home with all his suite to convey the alarming news that the pope had given the *British Isles* to the king of Spain! The statute books of this famous king

SIEGE OF A TOWN IN THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

show the most absurd endeavours to disturb the freedom of trade, betraying as little knowledge of the principles of political economy as our own legislators on the corn laws. Wishing to raise a manufacturing system, it was forbidden to import woollen cloths before we could supply the people with home-made goods. Money was prohibited from being carried out of the country. They were obliged to let in foreign cloth, or the people would soon have been naked; yet after awhile they prohibited it again. A famine having taken place, they passed an act to keep down the price of

King and Armour-bearer. 13th century.—Meyrick.

all articles of food; the consequence of which was, nobody would bring any such articles to market; and they were compelled to abolish that. Then they did the same thing by labour, fixing the rate of wages; and yet when Wat Tyler's party in the following reign wanted to regulate the price of land, the attempt was pronounced barbarous.

In this reign an act was passed ordering all pleas to be conducted in English and enrolled in Latin, they having been hitherto, since the Norman Conquest, chiefly conducted and enrolled in Norman-French, which was quite an unknown tongue to the bulk of the common people. The statutes, however, had been recorded in Latin till 1266, when they began to be written in French. This took place at Winchester in some statutes concerning the exchequer, and not in the statute of Westminster in 1675, as asserted by some historians. The practice of pleading in French was not uniform in the reign of Edward I., but became more and more, till in Edward III.'s reign it was almost exclusively used. In the same parliament of Winchester there were penalties enacted against the extortions of bakers and brewers. The bakers were punished by the pillory; the brewers, who, it appears, were all women, by the ducking-stool. The wars with France had now created an anti-French feeling, and so far tended to develop the English language as well as spirit, and make it the language of all classes.

The reign of Richard II. is distinguished constitutionally by the more regular and established separate assembling of the two houses of parliament, and by the rapidly rising power of the commons. This house had now its duly appointed speaker, Sir Peter de la Mare being particularly noted in that office, and the commons proceeded to impeach the king's ministers for maladministration. Having, however, given the king supplies for life, the commons lost its influence, became servile and debased, and led more than anything to the deposition and destruction of the monarch.

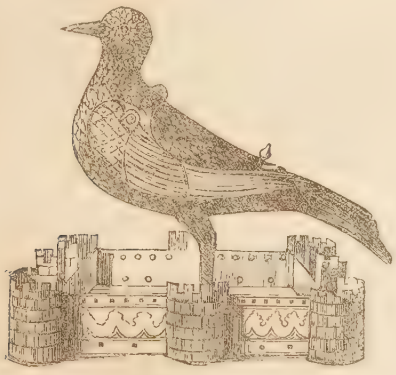
During the period now under review, Wales was added permanently to England by Edward II., and its laws and constitution made identical. The laws of Scotland, also, during this time were very similar to those of England. The great Robert Bruce, after his power was established by the battle of Bannockburn, summoned a parliament, which met at Scone, in 1319, and passed a capitulary, or collection of statutes; and in 1328 a second system or capitulary was passed, consisting of thirty-eight chapters. Many of these are clearly framed from the English statutes of Henry III. and Edward I., and some of them are transcribed almost verbatim; a proof of the wisdom and magnanimity of Bruce, who did not disdain to benefit by the good laws of an enemy. The parliament held at Cambuskenneth, in 1326, included not only burgesses, but all the other freeholders of the kingdom. In a word, so great was the resemblance between the laws and constitutions of the two countries during this period, that it is not necessary to note the minor differences. The parliament of Scotland never divided itself into lords and commons.

It is difficult to ascertain the annual revenues of the crown in those ages. That of Henry III. is stated at 60,000 marks, or £40,000; and that of Edward III., at £150,000; and taking these sums at ten times their present value, the revenue of Henry III. must be equivalent to £400,000 now, and Edward III.'s to £1,500,000. If, however, we recollect the enormous and irregular exactions of those ages, especially on the Jews, the expenditure of the crown must have been immensely larger.

POWER OF THE CHURCH.

Between the reign of John and the termination of that of Richard II. a striking change had taken place in the power of the church in England. From the zenith of that marvellous dominion over the kingdoms of this world, such as no church or religion had yet exercised in the annals of mankind, it had begun sensibly to wane. From that extraordinary spectacle when, at Torcy, on the Loire, in 1162, the two greatest kings of Christendom, those of England and France, were seen holding the stirrups of the servant of servants, Alexander III., and leading his horse by the reins, to the day when John, just half a century afterwards, laid the crown of this fair empire at the feet of the pope, "and became a servant unto tribute," everything had seemed to root the papacy deeper into the heart of the world. Kings, nobles, and people bowed down to it, and

received its foot on their necks with profound humility, only occasionally evincing a slight wincing under its exactions. At that period the church of Rome had reached the summit of its glory; but before the era at which we have now arrived it had received a stern warning that its days in this country were numbered as the established hierarchy. So long as the people were kept ignorant of the Bible the opposition of king or peer mattered little to it; but the people withdrew their allegiance, and it fell rapidly.



13th century. Ciborium, in the Collection of Prince Soltykoff, at Paris.

The pope, who strenuously supported John against his barons, was equally friendly to his infant son, Henry III. Cardinal Langton, now in the ascendant, held a synod at Oxford in 1222, in which fifty canons were passed, some of which let in a curious light on the internal condition of the church. The twenty-eighth canon forbids the keeping of concubines by the clergy openly in their houses, or visiting them openly, as they did, to the great scandal of religion. In 1237 a council was held at London by Otho, the papal legate, in which were passed what were afterwards known as the "Constitutions of Otho." The fifteenth and sixteenth canons of this constitution were aimed at the same practice, and at clandestine marriages of the priests, which were declared to be very common.

But the great object of the church was to collect all the English moneys, and in this pursuit there was no slackness. A cardinal legate generally resided in this country, whose chief function this was. During Otho's abode here, three hundred Italians came over and were installed in lucrative livings in the churches and abbeys. In pursuance of Magna Charta, that the church should be free, it became the only free thing in the kingdom; every class of men were its vassals, and England was one great sponge which the Italian pontiff squeezed vigorously. The barons in 1245 became so exasperated that they sent orders to the wardens of the sea-ports to seize all persons bringing bulls or mandates from Rome. The legate remonstrated, and the barons then told the king, that the church preferments alone held by Italians in England, independent of other exactions, amounted to sixty thousand marks per annum, a greater sum than the revenues of the crown. The barons went further; they sent an embassy to the papal council of Lyons, where the pope was presiding in person, when they declared, "We can no longer with any patience bear these oppressions. They are as detestable to God and man as they are intolerable to us; and, by the grace of God, we will no longer endure them."

But, so far from relaxing his hold, the pope soon after sent an order demanding the half of all revenues of the non-resident clergy, and a third of those of the resident ones. This outrageous attempt roused the English clergy to determined resistance, and the rapacious pope was defeated. Amongst the most patriotic of the English prelates was the celebrated Robert Grosteste, or Grosted, or literally Greathead, bishop of Lincoln. Innocent IV., one of the most imperious pontiffs who ever filled the papal chair, had sent Grosted a bull containing a clause which created a wonderful ferment in the church and the public mind, commencing with the words *Non obstante*, which meant, notwithstanding all that the English clergy had to advance, the holy father was determined to have his will, and he commanded the venerable bishop to bestow a benefice upon an infant. The honest bishop tore up the bull and wrote to the pope, declaring that the conduct of the see of Rome "shook the very foundations of faith and security amongst mankind," and that to put an infant into a living would be next to the sins of Lucifer and of Anti-Christ, was in direct opposition to the precepts of Christ, and would be the destruction of souls by depriving them of the benefits of the pastoral office. He refused to comply, and said plainly that the sins of those who attempted such a thing rose as high as their office.

Crozier, 13th century. In the Collection of Prince Soltykoff, at Paris.

The astonished pope was seized with a furious passion on receiving this epistle, and swore by St. Peter and St. Paul that he would utterly confound that old, impertinent, deaf, doting fellow, and make him the astonishment of the world. "What!" he exclaimed, "is not England our possession, and its king our vassal, or rather our slave?"

The resistance of the English clergy only inflamed the cupidity and despotism of the pontiffs. Boniface, the archbishop of Canterbury, was the servile tool of Rome, and after him Kilwarby, Peckham, and Winchelsey, carried things with a high hand. At various synods and councils held at Merton, Lambeth, London, Reading, and other

places, they passed canons, which went to give the church unlimited power over everything and everybody. The church was to appoint to all livings and dignities; no lay-

Costume of a Bishop of the 14th century.

man was to imprison a clergyman; the church was to enjoy peaceably all pious legacies and donations. The barons wrote to the pope, remonstrating and complaining against the immorality of the clergy. The pope replied that he did not suppose the English clergy were any more licentious than they had always been. The possessions of the church went on growing to such an extent, from the arts of the priests and superstition of the wealthy, that they are said to have amounted to three-fourths of the property of the whole kingdom, and threatened to swallow up all its lands. To put a stop to this fearful condition of things, Edward I. passed his famous statute of mortmain in 1279, and arrested the progress, for a considerable time, of the papal avarice.

But, perhaps, the finest draught of golden fishes which the imperial representative of Peter of Galilee ever made in England, was twenty-five years before the passing of this act, when he had induced Henry III. to nominate his son Edmund to the fatal crown of Naples, and, on pretence of supporting his claim, the pope drew from England, within a few years, no less a sum than nine hundred and fifty thousand marks, equal in value and purchasable power to twelve millions sterling of our present money.

Boniface VIII., famous in his day as the most haughty and uncompromising of the popes, issued a bull prohibiting all princes, in all countries, levying taxes on the clergy without his consent. Winchelsey, archbishop of Canterbury, produced this bull, and forbade Edward I. to touch the sacred patrimony of the church. But Edward was a monarch of the true British breed, and soon proved himself more than a match for the archbishop and his Roman master. He held a parliament at Edmondsbury in 1296 and demanded a fifth of the movables of the clergy. They refused. Edward gave them till the next parliament, in January, 1297, to consider of it, when, still refusing, and supposing themselves victorious, the king coolly told them that, as they refused to contribute to the support of the state, they should enjoy no protection from the state. He forthwith outlawed them in a body, and ordered all the sheriffs in England "to seize all the lay fees of the clergy, as well secular as regular, with all their goods and chattels, and retain them till they had further orders from him."

Effigy of Jocelyn, Bishop of Salisbury. From a Tomb in Salisbury Cathedral.

He gave orders to all the judges, also, "to do every man justice against the clergy, but to do them justice against no man."

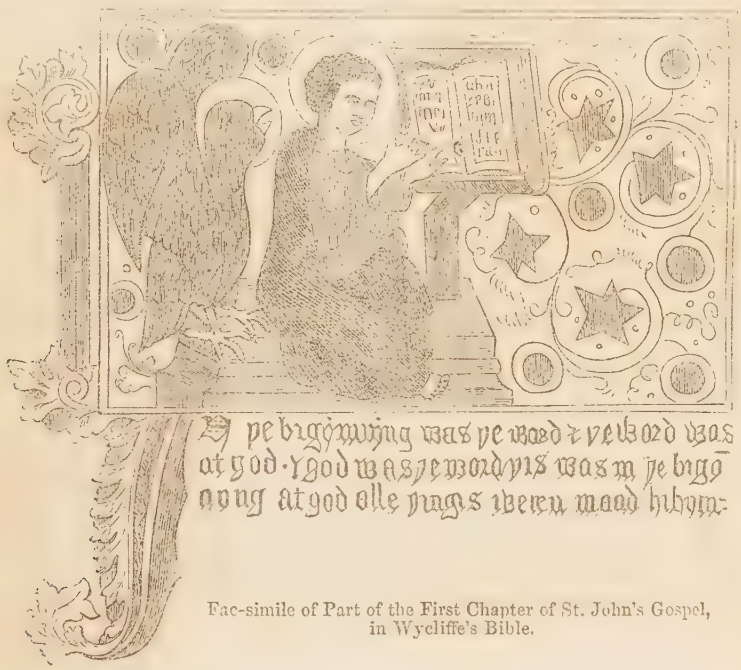
This was a state of things which they had never expected; no monarch had ever dreamt of, or had dared to attempt such a measure. It came like a thunder-clap upon the clergy. They found themselves insulted, abused, and plundered on all sides. The archbishop himself, the author of all this mischief, was stripped of everything, and on the very verge of starvation, and was glad to submit and pay his fifth to recover the rest of his property.

The power of the popedom had thus been brought into collision with the royal power, and the issue was such as was most damaging to the papal prestige all the world over. But Winchelsey, having regained his possessions, was too indignant to remain quiet. He held a second synod at Merton, and denounced the utmost terrors of the church against all sacrilegious invaders of the church property, and would not rest till Edward obtained his suspension from the next pope, Clement, and expelled him the kingdom.

curators of such person; and this was again renewed in 1392 with additional severity by Richard II., including all who brought into the kingdom any papal bull, excommunication, or anything of the kind.

Eight years prior to this Wycliffe died. His doctrines were rapidly spreading; the reformers, under the name of Lollards, were becoming numerous; the papal hierarchy was proportionally alarmed, and Arundel, the archbishop of York, became their most active enemy. But before he could mature his designs against them, he was involved in the prosecution of the adherents of the duke of Gloucester for procuring a commission to control the king, for which his brother, the earl of Arundel, was beheaded, and he himself banished. The dawn of the reformation already reddened the East, but the day was yet far off.

During the fourteenth century, the leading men of the church in Scotland distinguished themselves rather in the



Fac-simile of Part of the First Chapter of St. John's Gospel, in Wycliffe's Bible.

These contests betwixt the civil and ecclesiastical power in England continued through the whole period we are reviewing, that is, from 1307 to 1399, or from the commencement of the reign of Edward II. to the end of that of Richard II. To increase the influence of Rome there had arrived two new orders of friars, the Franciscan and Dominican, in the reign of Henry III. The Franciscans appeared in England in 1216, and the Dominicans in 1217. Before their arrival the country swarmed with monks, but these were styled mendicant friars, as devoted to a species of holy beggary. But in 1311, in the early part of the reign of Edward II., the church suffered a great defeat by the overthrow and annihilation of the famous military order of Knights Templars. To prevent the pope thrusting foreigners into the English prelacies and benefices, Edward III. passed a second statute of provisors, and followed it by the statute of præmunire, ordering the confiscation of the property and the imprisonment of the person of every one who should carry any pleas out of the kingdom, as well as of the pro-

patriotic defence of their country against the English, than in theological matters. Amongst the most distinguished of these were Lambeton, of St. Andrews, Wishart, of Glasgow, Landells, who was bishop of St. Andrews from 1341 to 1385, forty-four years, and Dr. Robert Trail, primate of Scotland, who built the castle of St. Andrews, and died in 1401, leaving a great name for strict discipline and wisdom. It is singular that, during this period, the doctrines of Wycliffe, which had made such a ferment in England, appear to have excited little or no attention in Scotland.

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

During the period now under review, the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the language of the learned was still Latin, and the circle of education still included little more than the Trivium and Quadrivium of the former age that is, the course of three sciences—grammar, rhetoric, and logic; and the course of four—music, arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy. The grammar was almost exclusively

confined to the Latin, for Roger Bacon says that there were not more than three or four persons in his time that knew anything of Greek or the Oriental languages; nay, so gross was the ignorance of the students of the time of the common elementary forms of Latin itself, that Kilwarby, archbishop of Canterbury, on a visit to Oxford in 1276, upbraided the students with such corruptions as these:—"Ego currit; tu currit; currens est ego," &c.

When grammar was so defective the rhetoric taught could not be very profound. The mendicant friars seem to have cultivated it with the greatest assiduity, as necessary to give effect to their harangues, and Bederic de Bury, provincial of the Augustinians, in the fourteenth century, was greatly admired for the eloquence of his preaching.

But logic was the all-absorbing study of the time. The clergy who had attended the crusaders had brought back from the East a knowledge of Aristotle, through Latin translations and the commentaries of his Arabian admirers. His logic was now applied not only to such metaphysics as were taught, but also to theology. Hence arose the school divinity, in which the doctrines taught by the church were endeavoured to be made conformable to the Aristotelian modes of reasoning, and to be defended by it. If we are to judge of the logic of this period by what remains of it, we should say it was the art of disputing without meaning or object; of perplexing the plainest truths, and giving an air of plausibility to the grossest absurdities. As, for instance, it was argued with the utmost earnestness that "two contrary propositions might be both true." At this time there were no less than thirty thousand students at Oxford, and Hume very reasonably asks, what were these young men all about? Studying bad logic and worse metaphysics.

The metaphysics of these ages were almost engrossed by the great controversy of the Nominalists and the Realists. The question, agitated with all the vehemence of a matter of life and death, being, whether general ideas were realities, or only the particular ideas of things were real. The Nominalists declared that a general idea, derived from comparing a great number of individual facts, was no reality, but a mere idea or name; the Realists contended that these general ideas were as absolute actualities as the individual ones on which they were based. Rocelin of Compiègne revived this old question at the end of the eleventh century, and thus became the head of the schoolmen of those ages; but William of Ockham in the fourteenth century again revived this extraordinary question with all its ancient vehemence, his partisans acquiring the name of Ockhamists. Ockham was a Nominalist, and, says an old historian, he and his party "waged a fierce war against another sect of schoolmen, called Realists, about certain metaphysical subtilties which neither of them understood."

Author, and Copyist writing. From a Miniature of the Romance, "*L'Image du Monde*," MS. 7070, fol. i., in the Imperial Library of Paris.

Moral philosophy could not be much more rationally taught when metaphysics and logic were so fantastic. Many systems of moral philosophy were taught by the schoolmen, abounding in endless subtle distinctions and divisions of virtues and vices, and a host of questions in each of these divisions. By the logic, metaphysics, and moral philosophy of the schoolmen combined, the most preposterous doctrines were often taught. For instance, Nicholas de Ultricuria taught this proposition in the University of Paris in 1300:—"It may be lawful to steal, and the theft can be pleasing to God. Suppose a young gentleman of good family meets with a very learned professor (meaning himself) who is able in a short time to

teach him all the speculative sciences, but will not do it for less that one hundred pounds, which the young gentleman cannot procure but by theft; in that case theft is lawful. Which is thus proved. Whatever is pleasing to God is lawful. It is pleasing to God that a young gentleman learn all the sciences; but he cannot do this without theft; therefore theft is lawful, and pleasing to God."

It was high time that something tangible and substantial should come to the rescue of the human mind from this destructive cobwebry of metaphysics; and the first thing which did this was the study of the canon law. The civil and the canon laws not only gave their students lucrative employment as pleaders, but were the road to advancement in the church. The clergy in these ages were not only almost the only lawyers, but also the doctors, though some of the laity now entered the profession as a distinct branch. "The civil and canon laws," says Robert Holcot, a writer of that time, "are in our days so exceedingly profitable, procuring riches and honours, that almost the whole multitude of scholars apply to the study of them."

What was the real knowledge of the science of medicine at this period we may imagine from the great medical work of John Gaddesden, who was educated at Merton College, Oxford, and declared to be the grand luminary of physic in the fourteenth century. "He wrote," says Leland, "a large and learned work on medicine, to which, on account of its excellences, was given the illustrious title of the 'Medical Rose.' This is a recipe in the 'illustrious Medical Rose' of Gaddesden, for the cure of small-pox:—After this (the appearance of the eruption) cause the whole body of your patient to be wrapped in red scarlet cloth, or in any other red cloth, and command everything about the bed to be made red. This is an excellent cure. It was

Roger Bacon.

in this manner I treated the son of the noble king of England, when he had the small-pox, and I cured him without leaving any marks."

The royal patient thus treated must have been Edward III., or his brother, prince John of Eltham.

To cure epilepsy Gaddesden orders the patient "and his parents" to "fast three days and then go to church. The patient must first confess, he must have mass on Friday and Saturday, and then on Sunday the priest must read over the patient's head the gospel for September, in the time of vintage, after the feast of the holy cross. After this the priest shall write out this portion of the gospel reverently, and bind it about the patient's neck, and he shall be cured."

That is a sample of the practice of medicine from the great work of the great physician of the age. As to the surgery of the time, it is thus described by Guy de Cauliac, in his "System of Surgery," published in Paris in 1363:—"The practitioners in surgery are divided into five sects. The first follow Roger and Roland, and the four masters, and apply poultices to all wounds and abscesses. The second follow Brunus and Theodoric, and in the same cases use wine only. The third follow Saliceto and Lanfranc, and treat wounds with ointments and soft plasters. The fourth are chiefly Germans, who attend the armies, and promiscuously use potions, oil, and wool. The fifth are old women and ignorant people, who have recourse to the saints in all cases."

It was high time that a man like Roger Bacon should appear, and teach men to come out of all this jugglery and mere fancy-work both in science and philosophy, and put everything to the test of experiment,—a mode of philosophising, however, which made little progress till the appearance, three centuries later, of another Bacon, the great Verulam. For the knowledge of geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, and chemistry, or rather astrology and alchemy, as taught at that period, we may refer to our notice of Bacon amongst the great men of the era.

But the number of schools and colleges which were erected during this period, are a striking proof that the spirit of inquiry and the love of knowledge was taking rapid and deep root in the nation. In Oxford alone seven colleges were founded during this period. University Hall or college was founded by king Alfred, but its foundation was overturned and its funds dissipated long before this period. William archdeacon of Durham, who died in 1249, bequeathed three hundred and ten marks to the university, and may be considered the founder of this college: his money was expended for this purpose. Baliol College was founded by John Baliol, the father of John the king of Scotland, about 1268, and completed by the lady Devorgilla, his widow. Merton College was founded by Walter Merton, bishop of Rochester, in 1268. Exeter College was founded by Walter Stapleton, bishop of Exeter, and Peter de Skelton, a clergyman, in 1315. It was first called Stapleton College. Oriel College was founded by Edward II., and his almoner, Adam de Brun, about 1342, and was called the hall of the Blessed Virgin of Oxford, but derived its permanent name from a fresh endowment by Edward III. Queen's College was founded by Robert Eaglefield, chaplain to Philippa, queen of Edward III., and named in her honour because she greatly aided him in establishing it. New College was named St. Mary's College by its builder and founder, William of Wykeham, who also built one at Winchester. It was finished in 1386.

In Cambridge during this period were founded nine colleges, namely:—Peter House was founded by Hugh Balsham, afterwards bishop of Ely, about 1282. Michael College, dedicated to St. Michael, was founded and endowed about 1324, by Harvey de Stanton, chancellor of the exchequer to Edward II, University Hall was founded by Richard Badew, chancellor of the university, in 1326, but was soon after destroyed by fire. King's Hall was built by Edward III., but afterwards united to Trinity College. Clare Hall was a restoration of University Hall, by Elizabeth de Clare, countess of Ulster, and named in honour of her family. Pembroke Hall was built by Mary de St. Paul, 1347, widow of Aymer de Valence, earl of Pembroke, in memory of her husband, who was killed in a tournament soon after their marriage. She named it the Hall of Valence and Mary. Bennet College was founded near the same time by the united guilds of Corpus Christi and St. Mary, assisted by Henry duke of Lancaster. Trinity Hall was founded about 1350, by William Bateman, bishop of Norwich. Gonvil Hall was founded by Edward Gonvil, parson of Terrington and Rushworth in Norfolk, about the same time as Trinity was built.

These were for the most part small and simple establishments at first, but have arrived at their present wealth and magnificence by additional benefactions.

The numbers of scholars who rushed into these schools at first was something extraordinary; nor were their character and appearance less so. They are described by Anthony à Wood as a regular rabble, who were guilty of theft and all kinds of crimes and disorders. He declares that they lived under no discipline, nor any masters, but only thrust themselves into the schools at lectures, that they might pass for scholars when they were called to account by the townsmen for any mischief, so as to free them from the jurisdiction of the burghers. At one time, according to Fitz-Ralph, the archbishop of Armagh, there were no less than thirty thousand students—or so-called students—in Oxford alone; but he says that they were again reduced to less than six thousand, so many of them had joined the mendicant friars.

Such was the disorder of the two universities at this time, the violent quarrels, not only betwixt the students and the townspeople, but also betwixt each other, that many of the members of both universities retired to Northampton, and with the permission of Henry III. commenced a new university there; but the people of Oxford and Cambridge found means to obtain its dissolution from the king. About thirty years afterwards they tried the same experiment at Stamford, but were stopped in the same manner.

London at this time so abounded with schools, that it was called the third university. Edward III. built the college of St. Stephen at Westminster for a college of divinity; which was dissolved by Henry VIII. Archbishop Bradwardine founded a theological lecture in St. Paul's Church, and John of Gaunt founded a college for divines in St. Paul's churchyard. There were various schools besides these, but the most remarkable were the great schools of law, which arose out of the provisions of

the Great Charter, which fixed the chief courts of justice at Westminster. Sir John Fortescue, who studied in one of these inns of court, describes them as a great school or university of law, consisting of several colleges. "The situation," he says, "where the students read and study is between Westminster and the City of London. There belong to it ten lesser inns, and sometimes more, which are called the inns of Chancery, in each of which there are a hundred students at least, and in some of them a far greater number not constantly residing." In these the young nobility and gentry of England began to receive some part of their education, so that with all these colleges of learning and of law, the laity as well as the clergy began to reap the benefits of education.

MEN OF LEARNING AND SCIENCE.

Amongst the theologians of this period none surpass for extent of learning, talent, and eloquence, Robert Grosteste, or Greathead, bishop of Lincoln. He was originally a very poor lad; but the mayor of Lincoln, noticing his quickness of faculty, took him into his house and put him to school. He studied at Oxford, Cambridge, and Paris, his splendid talents acquiring him many patrons. Bacon, who knew him well, gives this testimony of him:—"Robert Greathead, bishop of Lincoln, and his friend prior Adam de Marisco, are the two most learned men in the world, and excel all the rest of mankind both in divine and human knowledge."

Greathead was one of the very few real Greek scholars of the age, and was equally versed in Hebrew, French, and Latin. But, beyond his learning, which he has embodied in many voluminous works, his noble and independent character stands pre-eminent in those times. We have mentioned his opposition to the pope inducting mere infants into church livings; and the caution which the cardinals are reported, by Matthew Paris, to have given the pope when he threatened to take vengeance on him, is remarkable, as indicating their knowledge of the tendency of the age. "Let us not raise a tumult in the church without necessity, and precipitate that revolt and separation from us which we know must one day take place."

But the man of that time in philosophy was Roger Bacon, as Chaucer was in literature. Bacon was born near Ilchester, and educated at Oxford, and afterwards at Paris. On his return to England, at the age of twenty-six, he again settled at Oxford, and entered the order of Franciscan friars of that city, that he might study at leisure. He soon abandoned the beaten track, and struck out a course of inquiry and experiment for himself. He was not content to study Aristotle alone at second hand, but he made himself master of Greek, and went to the fountain-head of ancient knowledge.

But that did not satisfy him. He sought to make himself acquainted with nature, the great fountain of all our human knowledge. He declared that if you would know the truth you must seek it by actual inquiry and experiment. In this system of philosophising he preceded Francis Bacon nearly three centuries and a half; but he was before his time, and, therefore, the benefit of his teaching was, to a great degree, lost. His great work, the "Opus Majus," contains the result of his researches; and he states in that work that he had expended two thousand pounds in twenty years on apparatus and experiments, a sum equal to thirty thousand pounds of our money at present. This he had done through the generosity of his friends and patrons, having made a greater amount of discoveries in geometry, astronomy, physics, optics, mechanics, and chemistry than ever were accomplished by any one man in an equal space of time. In his treatise on optics, "De Scientia Perspectiva," he gives you the mode of constructing spectacles and microscopic lenses. In mechanics, he talks of having ascertained by experiments wonders that we have not yet reached by steam; of a mode of propelling ships so that they should require only one man to guide them, and with a velocity greater than if they were full of sailors. "Chariots," he says "may be constructed that will move

Matthew Paris. From a Drawing by himself in Royal MS., Nero, D. 1

with incredible rapidity, without the help of animals." He speculated and believed in the capability of raising the most wonderful weights by mechanic contrivance, and of walking on the bottom of the sea. But, unfortunately, he has not left us the explicit exposition of these marvels. His system of chemical analysis has, however, been greatly praised by some modern chemists, and it is evident that he was well acquainted with gunpowder. "A little matter," he says, "about the bigness of a man's thumb, makes a horrible noise, and produces a dreadful corruscation; and by this a city or an army may be destroyed several ways." He then explains that sulphur, saltpetre, and powdered charcoal are the ingredients of this wonderful explosive substance. Whether Bacon discovered this mixture, or whether he learnt it in his Asiatic reading, has been a query. At all events, he knew the fact, and in Edward III.'s reign gunpowder came into use in war.

Bacon was the martyr of science. Instead of benefiting by his discoveries, the ignorant monks of his order accused him of necromancy and dealing with the devil. He was kept in close confinement for years, and he was not allowed to send his Opus Majus to any one except the pope. After receiving a copy of it, Clement IV. procured him his liberty, but he was very soon imprisoned again by Jerome de Esculo, general of the Franciscan order. He continued in confinement this time eleven or twelve years, and, on coming out, old and broken down by his cruel sufferings, he still continued his labours with undiminished ardour till his death in 1292.

A kindred spirit to Bacon was Michael Scott, who was born about the beginning of the thirteenth century at his family seat in Scotland. By his study of astrology and alchemy, in common with Bacon and the great inquirers of the time, he obtained the reputation of a magician, which has mixed up his name with the wildest popular legends and superstitions of Scotland. So strong were the convictions of his countrymen that he was a magician, that Dempster assures us many people in Scotland in his time dared not so much as to touch his works. Bishop Tanner says, "He was one of the greatest philosophers, physicians, and linguists of his age; and though his fondness for astrology, alchemy, physiognony, and chiromancy made people think him a magician, none speaks or writes more respectfully of God and religion than he does."

He was deeply read in the Greek and Arabic languages, and while residing at the court of the emperor Frederick II. he translated for that prince the works of Aristotle into Latin, to which Bacon attributes the high admiration which those works obtained afterwards in Europe.

Duns Scotus, though supposed to be of Scotch origin, was educated at Oxford, went then to Paris, to maintain before the assembled university of that city his favourite doctrine of the immaculate conception of the Virgin. He had profoundly studied moral philosophy, mathematics, civil and canon law, and school divinity. No man of his age was so admired and applauded, but his works now sleep covered with the dust of ages.

William of Ockham was a very learned and eloquent theologian, who maintained the temporal independence of kings, and was supported against all the efforts of three successive popes to crush him by his patron the emperor Ludwig of Germany; but on the death of that prince he was compelled to recant. He did not long survive this humiliation, having for many years borne the title of the Singular and Invincible Doctor. During his life appeared Wycliffe, and under happier auspices proclaimed the freedom of religion.

The historians of this period, from whom, and from the parliamentary writs and statutes, our history is derived, are chiefly these:—

Matthew Paris has been greatly quoted as a high authority from the earliest times to the year 1273, or to the end of Henry III.'s reign. Matthew Paris, however, on inspection, divides himself into three persons, all monks of St. Alban's, namely, Roger Wendover, Matthew Paris, and William Rishanger. Matthew Paris's own share comprehends only the period from 1235 to 1259, about twenty-five years. He continues Wendover, and Rishanger continues him. The work of Matthew Paris is the "Historia Major." Besides this he wrote the lives of Offa I. and II., and lives of twenty-three abbots of St. Alban's. Wendover's chronicle, "Flores Historiarum," reaches from the creation to the year 1238, and is divided at the birth of Christ into two halves. Matthew Paris, in copying Wendover, has taken care to infuse here and there his own spirit, which was one of great freedom of remark on kings, priests, popes, and, what is singular, on the usurpations of the court of Rome itself. Matthew had seen the world and courts, and has picked up a great quantity of amusing anecdotes and curious characteristics of great men. He went as ambassador of Louis IX. to Hacon of Norway, and at the pope's instance made a visitation of the monastery of Holm, in that kingdom. He was employed in writing history by Henry III., and even assisted by him in it. He says, "He wrote this almost constantly with the king in his palace, at his table, and in his closet; and that prince guided his pen in writing in the most diligent and condescending manner." No historian who has written of his own times has shown more boldness and independence than Matthew Paris. Though a monk, he did not hesitate to paint the corruptions of monastic life in the most plain colours, nor to denounce the corruptions of the church and hierarchy at large with equal honesty. For this he has been assailed and charged even with interpolating falsehoods by those whom his honest freedom had offended. But Matthew Paris was not only a most accomplished man for that age, but one of the most uncorruptible of those who ever associated with kings and pontiffs. He is declared at the same time to have been "famous for the purity, integrity, innocence, and simplicity of his manners."

Matthew Westminster copied Matthew Paris's "Flowers of History," which had not then been printed.

Thomas Wykes wrote a chronicle extending from the Conquest to 1304. He was a canon in the Abbey of Osney. The latter years of his chronicle, from 1293, are supposed to be by another hand.

Walter Hemmingford, a monk of the Abbey of Gisborne, in Yorkshire, wrote a chronicle of about the same period with Wykes, ending 1347. John de Trokelowe and Henry de Blanford, who are supposed to have been monks of St. Alban's, wrote histories of Edward II., as did also the anonymous monk of Malmsbury.

Bartholomew Cotton, whose work still remains unprinted in the Cotton MS., has copied other chronicles in his earlier pages; but the reign of Edward I. to the year 1298 is a very valuable contribution to our history.

Robert Avesbury, who was registrar of the court of the archbishop of Canterbury, wrote the history of Edward III. to the year 1356. His account is most valuable. He gives us many particulars that appear nowhere else, which, as he had access to the best sources, are undoubtedly correct. They serve us to test the accounts of Froissart, who is apt to merge into the romantic. In this work of Avesbury's abound original letters of Edward regarding the attack on Cambray in 1336; the expedition into Brittany in 1342: relations of the circumstances which led to the battle of Creçy by officers and eye-witnesses, and despatches from the camps of the earl of Derby and the Black Prince; with similar most interesting and invaluable documents.

Adam de Murimath wrote the history of Edward II. and the earlier part of that of Edward III. He was engaged much in public affairs as ambassador, both from the clergy to the pope at Avignon, and from the king to the court of Rome, as well as afterwards to the king of Sicily on account of Edward's claims in Provence. He saw much, and, as professor of civil law, was much engaged in affairs of the government, but his account is somewhat meagre and dry.

Besides these we may name Nicholas Trivet, who wrote "Annals," from 1130 to 1307. Ralph Higdon, whose "Polychronicon" ends in 1357, and has been translated into English by John de Trevisa. Robert de Brunne, or Manning, a canon of Brunne, in Lincolnshire, wrote a rhymed chronicle, including versions or appropriations of Ware's old French poem of Brut, and Peter Langtoft's French "Rhymed Cronicall." The latter part, from king Ina to Edward I.'s death, has some historic merit. Henry Knyghton, a canon of Leicester, is the author of a history from the time of king Edgar to 1395, and of an account of the deposition of Richard II. His work is of great authority in the latter of these reigns. Thomas de la Moor wrote a life of Edward II., and asserts that he had the account of the battle of Bannockburn and Edward's last days from eye-witnesses.

In Scottish history of this period, we have the "Scala-cronica," of Sir Thomas Gray of Heton, who was a native of the north of England, being taken prisoner by the Scots. He has left us in his "Cronicall" many particulars of the times of Wallace. Andrew Wyntown, the author of the "Orygynale Cronykil of Scotland," was living in the long reign of David II., and his rhymed chronicle reaches from the beginning of the world, in the fashion of those times, to the year 1424. He was canon of the priory of St. Andrew. The portion of his chronicle from the beginning of David II.'s reign to the end of Robert II., is supposed to be by another hand. John Fordun's "Scotichronicon" is a regular chronicle of Scotland to the year 1385. This work was continued by Walter Bower, abbot of St. Columkil in the 15th century.

Besides these the monastic registers of Mailros, ending in 1270; of Margan, ending 1232; of Burton, ending 1262; and Waverl y, ending 1291, afford evidence of the history of Scotland and England, and of the literary talent of the two countries at this time.

But it is to the poets of this era that we must look for the chief genius, and the evidences of the progress of literature in the nation. It is a singular fact, that while the Roman church had continued the use of the Latin language during the middle ages, it had neglected or rather discouraged the reading of the great Roman and Greek writers, so that the Greek and Roman classical literature became, as it were, extinct. The great classical authors which were not destroyed, lay buried in the dust of abbeys and monasteries. So completely was Greek literature and the Greek forgotten, that we find Bacon declaring in the thirteenth century that there were not above four men in England who understood Greek, or could pass the fifth proposition of the first book of Euclid, the familiar *pons asinorum*, or bridge of asses. So utterly were the clergy unacquainted with Greek that, on finding a New Testament amongst the books of the reformers, they declared that it was some new heretical language. But, as knowledge revived, the same men who were the greatest advocates for classical studies and the restoration of the classical writers to public use, were those who began also to write in their vernacular tongues; and this was especially the case with Petrarch in Italy.

Latin was the almost universal language of the learned in art, science, and literature still at this period. The works of the chroniclers were written in Latin for the most part; Bacon wrote all his works in Latin. But for some time, in all the great countries of Europe, eminent authors—and especially the poets—had begun to use their native tongues. Dante, Boccaccio, and Petrarch in Italy had set the example; Froissart had done it in French; and now our great poets in England did the same.

This was a proof that the English language was now travelling up from the common people, and establishing itself amongst all ranks. It was no longer left to the common people to speak Anglo-Saxon, now fast melting in English. The Norman nobles and gentry found themselves speaking English, and engrafting on it many of their own terms. Metrical romances and songs had long been circulated amongst the people; they now reached the higher classes. Robert of Gloucester versified the chronicle of Robert of Monmouth; Peter Langtoft, a canon of Bridlington, found his chronicle in French verse translated into English by Robert Manning of Brunne, already mentioned. This was the English of that day:—

> Pers of Langtoft, a chanon,
> Schaven in the house of Bridlyngton,
> O Frankis style this storie he wrote,
> Of Inglis kinges, &c.

But about the middle of the fourteenth century Robert Langlande, a secular priest of Oxford, wrote a famous satirical allegory against persons of all professions, called "The Vision of Pierce Plowman." This is usually considered the first English poem, but it is rather an Anglo-Saxon one, for the author, probably very Saxon in his feelings, has not only imitated the alliterative poetry of the Saxons without rhyme, but he has made the language as antique as possible. This is precisely what Spenser did in his "Faery Queen," in the reign of Elizabeth; he went backwards in his diction, so that now it is nearly obsolete, while the language of his cotemporary Shakespeare is still sterling English, and likely to continue so. Who could imagine that these lines were written in the same age as those which we shall place beside them by a cotemporary:—

> Hunger in hast tho' hint Wastour by the maw,
> And wrong him so by the wombe that both his eies watered.
> He buffeted the Briton about the chekes
> That he loked lyke a lanterne al his life after.

Take now these few lines from John Barbour of the same period:—

Ah, freedom is a noble thing!
Freedom makes man to have liking;
Freedom all solace to man gives;
He lives at ease that freely lives.
A noble heart may have none ease,
Nor nought else that may it pleas
If freedom fail.

Now this was the work, not of an English, but Scotch poet, who wrote in English.

John Barbour was born in Aberdeen in 1330. He became under David II. archdeacon of Aberdeen in 1356, when, of course, he was only twenty-six years of age. He obtained permission of Edward III., through his own sovereign, to study at Oxford, and became famous, not only as a divine and philosopher, but a poet, only surpassed in that age by Chaucer, and certainly far more purely English in his language than Chaucer himself. His great poem is the story of Robert Bruce and his noble companions Douglas and Randolph, earl of Moray.

Of the English poets, with a reference to Laurence Minot, who celebrated the exploits of Edward III. in martial poems, and has, therefore, been styled the Tyrtæus of his age, we shall only now mention Gower and Chaucer.

John Gower was of an ancient and opulent family,—we believe the duke of Sutherland claims him as his ancestor,—and he consequently received the best education that the age could procure. He was born in 1324, and entered the Inner Temple at a suitable age. He rose high in his profession, and indulged himself in his leisure hours in poetry. Gower wrote, besides smaller pieces, three considerable poems, one in Latin, one in French, and one in English

Geoffrey Chaucer.

namely:—"*Speculum Meditantis*," "*Vox Clamantis*," and "*Confessio Amantis*." There is no question that they possess much poetical merit, and they were greatly admired in their own time and long afterwards, but at present they would find few who would enjoy them. The "*Speculum Meditantis*" is a moral poem, recommending fidelity and mutual affection to married people; and hence Chaucer styled him the "Moral Gower"—a name which has continued with him. He is to our taste more moral than poetical Gower was originally disposed to call for reform in

the church, which he describes in dark colours; but the rebellion of Wat Tyler frightened him, and he became strongly opposed to Wycliffe and his doctrines. Yet he was a timid courtier. He dedicated his "*Confessio Amantis*" to Richard II., and afterwards to his dethroner, Henry of Lancaster.

> This boke upon amendement
> To stand to his commandement.
> With whom min herte is of accorde,
> I sende unto min owne lorde,
> Which of Lancashire is Henry named."

There can be no doubt that the successful appearance of Chaucer in his native English induced Gower to do the same.

Chaucer's great poem, the "Canterbury Tales," is a collection of poems which, for spirit, humour, knowledge of and enjoyment of life, have nothing like them, except Shakespeare. They are full of vigour, beauty, and the most subtle sense. They sparkle, burn, and laugh on every page. We have the most vivid picture of the times, and all the varied characters amongst whom he lived. We feel what a buoyant, genial soul he was, and yet we know that he did not escape without his troubles and his deep griefs. Warton, in his "History of English Poetry," says of him, "Chaucer surpasses his predecessors in an infinite proportion. His genius was universal, and adapted to themes of

The Queen's Cross, Northampton.

Chaucer was a far bolder, and far more original man. It is the most striking proof that English had now taken its firm hold at court itself when two such men as Gower and Chaucer cast the chance of their fame into that vehicle. Chaucer was brother-in-law to John of Gaunt, having married Philippa, the sister of John of Gaunt's third wife, Catherine Swineford. Chaucer was educated at both Cambridge and Oxford. He was a page to Edward III., and went as ambassador to Genoa and Flanders. On the former occasion it is probable that he met with Petrarch, for he says in the prologue to the Clerk's Tale—

> I wal you tell a tale, which that I
> Lerned at Padowe of a worthy clerk,
> Frauncis Petrark, the laureate poete.

unbounded variety. His merit was not less in painting familiar manners with humour and propriety, than in moving the passions, and in representing the beautiful or the grand objects of nature with grace and sublimity."

Truly is he called the father of our English poetry, and he had no real successor till the appearance of Spenser and Shakespeare.

ARCHITECTURE.

In the last chapter on this subject we traced the progress the early English style from its rise and through the best period of its duration. It was there shown how, by the combining into one window two or more lancets, and the circle above them, tracery was formed. This at first was left solid

and was not moulded, and the form of the tracery was simple; generally a circle, or circles, in the head or intersecting lines. The introduction of tracery gave great facilities for enlarging the width of the windows; and we accordingly find those of two or more lights gradually superseding the lancet.

After this change it is difficult to distinguish the late examples of one style from the early ones of the other; indeed tracery may be regarded as the commencement of the transition. But in the beginning of the reign of Edward I. a more decided change took place; tracery proper became fully developed, but the architects had not yet ventured on the graceful flowing lines which mark the true decorated style; they clung to their geometrical forms,

Building of St. Alban's Abbey. Cotton MS., Nero, D. 1.

and therefore we find, in windows of this time, circles, triangles, both plain and spherical squares, quatrefoils, trefoils, &c.: and for this reason this style of Edward I. has been called geometrical, or early decorated, which well distinguishes it from the fully developed, or flowing decorated. This is, perhaps, the best period of English architecture; for, though the geometrical forms give a certain stiffness to the tracery, it is more than compensated by the extreme beauty and finish of the workmanship. The imitation of natural foliage was perfect, and the drawing of the human figure more chaste and finished than at any other period. The style continued through the reign of Edward I.; after which it gradually changed into that of the more perfect decorated.

The decorated style differs from the early English in its windows, which, instead of being lancets, or having tracery of the simplest forms, had the head entirely filled with tracery, either of geometrical forms, or ramifying from the mullions in the most easy and graceful manner, and in every variety of design; and the same character will distinguish them from the next, or perpendicular style, in which the mullions are carried through in perpendicular lines to the head of the window.

In the decorated style Gothic architecture seems to have attained its greatest excellency: this was its culminating point. Up to this period it had gone on improving from change to change; its principles had been fully carried out, and the fancy seems to have run wild in imagining new forms of beauty. The more we contemplate the buildings of this period the more we are struck with admiration at the wonderful powers of invention possessed by the architects and workmen of the time. Wherever ornament was wanted, there it was ready, and always beautiful and appropriate. They possessed a keen perception of the beauties of nature, and hands capable of giving form to those perceptions. But when so much perfection had been attained, it is not unnatural, however it may be regretted, that the next change should be in a downward direction. This was the case here; and the introduction of the straight line led to the entire destruction of all that grace and freedom so much admired in decorated Gothic architecture.

Many of our finest ecclesiastical buildings are in this style. The beautiful crosses of Northampton, Waltham, and Geddington, erected by Edward I. to the memory of his queen Eleanor, are of the early or geometrical period, and afford many valuable details.

Exeter Cathedral, the nave of York, the Chapel of Merton College, Oxford, and the Chapter House, Wells, offer excellent examples of the geometrical period.

The west front of York is the finest specimen of a de-

corated front we possess, and the details are of the most exquisite description, both in design and execution.

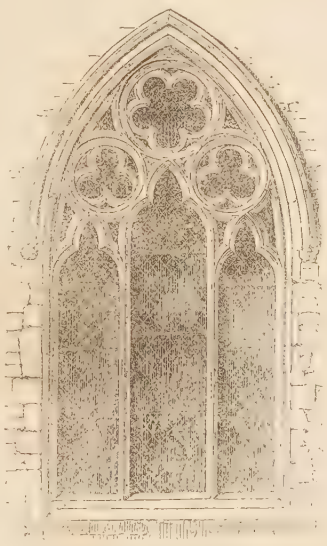
The Chapter House, York, is of early decorated character. It is octagonal and groined, and is said by Rickman to be "by far the finest polygonal room without a central pillar in the kingdom, and the delicacy and variety of its ornaments are nearly unequalled." That it must, even at the time of its erection, have been considered "unequalled" is shown by the inscription at the entrance—

"UT ROSA FLOS FLORUM,
SIC EST DOMUS ISTA DOMORUM."*

The Chapter House, Wells, is another extremely beautiful building of the same period; but this is supported by a central pillar.

Many fine churches of this style are to be found in various parts of the kingdom, of which one of the finest is Howden, Yorkshire; but many of them, though belonging to this period, are very plain in their details.

The monuments of this century are, both in composition and execution, the finest which exist. We have many fine bold compositions in early English, and many very elaborate ones in the perpendicular style, but none of them equal the decorated in chasteness of design and delicacy of execution. The monument of Aymer de Valence in Westmins er Abbey is a fine specimen of early decorated; the Percy shrine at Bevelrey Minster is another splendid example; and the effigy of queen Eleanor in Westminster Abbey is one of the most elegant figures in this or any other country.

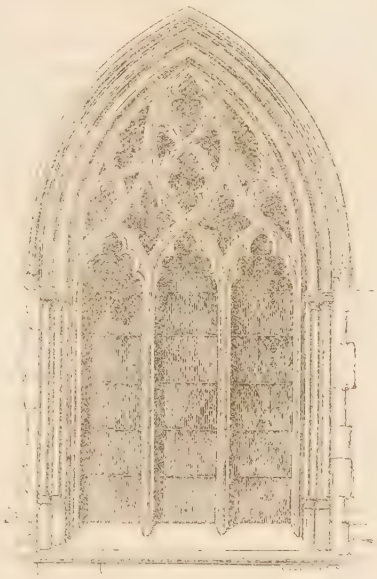


Window, from Meopham.

TOWERS. — Many church towers in this style are finished with spires, which are frequently crocketed and have spire lights, and sometimes they are banded with quatrefoils.

WINDOWS.—These are the most important features of the decorated style, and will require the greatest attention. In its early period, or what is called geometrical, the lancet window is still sometimes used; but it is foliated and not plain, as in early English. The heads of two-lights windows are divided by arches springing from the mullions. The spaces are filled with triangles, trefoils, quatrefoils, circles, &c., all the forms being such as could easily be drawn with the compasses; but the ogee, or flowing curve, is never used. In larger windows the same filling up of the head with geometrical forms is used, and plain intersecting tracery is not uncommon. These forms are combined in many different manners, and great variety is produced. The window given from Meopham is an example of early tracery.

By an easy and natural process this stiff tracery gave way to the flowing line which succeeded it. One of the earliest modifications was to fill the head of the window with flowing quatrefoils. This was much used in the time of Edward II. The use of the flowing line gave such great



Window, from St. Mary's, Beverley

facilities for design, that the varieties of tracery are almost innumerable; so much so, that they are difficult to describe, or even to classify, and in our small space it is impossible. They, however, all agree in one principle—that is, the mullions branching into tracery, and not being carried through to the head of the window, as in the next style. The one given from St Mary's, Beverley, is a good example for showing the manner in which the lines of the mullions were carried up. There are many windows in this style which have ogee heads and canopies.

DOORWAYS.—In small churches the doorways have frequently but little, except the mouldings, to distinguish them. These are carried without interruption down to the ground. They are commonly quite plain, but have sometimes hollows filled with the ball-flower or foliage. In cathedrals and large buildings the doorways are usually of large dimensions, and are often very deeply recessed. They are richly moulded, and the hollows filled with a profusion of ornament and foliage, among which the four-leaved flower and ball-flower are conspicuous. They have generally shafts, with capitals and bases; these shafts are not detached, as in the early English, but cut in the same stone as the mouldings. Sometimes a series of niches with figures is carried round the door.

The finest examples we have of decorated doors are those of the west front of York, and the south door of the choir, Lincoln. A canopy, either single or double, sometimes flowing and sometimes straight-lined and richly crocketed, is often carved over the door.

PORCHES are not numerous, but of great variety of form, and can in general be only distinguished by their mouldings and details. They have frequently a considerable projection, with windows in their sides and groined roofs. There is a very curious one at Over, in Cambridgeshire, which

* "As the rose is the flower of flowers,
So is this the house of houses."

has clustered shafts and pinnacles at the angles. Wooden porches with ornamental barge-boards are not uncommon.

The BUTTRESSES of this style are usually very rich. The earlier ones are in general finished with a small gable or canopy reaching as high as the parapet, as at Merton College, Oxford, where the pediment is filled with a trefoil, and the gargoyle, or water spout, of grotesque design, passes through just under it. Below this is a panel of window tracery, and the lower stage of the buttress has another pedimented head. This kind of buttress, though commonly plainer, belongs to the geometrical period. A much richer variety of the same kind occurs at the west front of Howden, where there is a canopied niche with a figure in it; and the buttress terminates in a turret pinnacle, with open-work, tracery, and a crocketed spire. In the later period of the style the buttresses are in many cases enriched with canopied niches, with or without figures, in both stages. Sometimes they have a plain set-off instead of a pediment; but in all cases they may be known by their peculiar mouldings. They are also repeatedly set on the angles of buildings diagonally, which is not the case with the preceding style.

The PINNACLES are numerous, and very fine. They are in general square, and set on diagonally; the sides are frequently panelled, and terminate in crocketed canopies, or gablets, from which rises the spire, which is also crocketed at the angles, and terminates in a finial. The foliage of the CROCKETS and FINIALS is loose and free, and has not the square, stiff form so observable in the perpendicular.

The PILLARS of this style in small churches are occasionally octagonal or plain round; but in large buildings they are very various in section. They have, at times, a number of small shafts surrounding a central pillar; but these shafts are, like those of the doors, cut out of the same block, and not detached, as in the early English style. In some instances the central mass is a lozenge, and in others a square set diagonally. In some cases, as at Exeter, it consists of a number of equal-sized small shafts set round a lozenge body. The small shafts are repeatedly filleted.

The BASES have not the rounds and deep hollows which we find in the early English, but are generally made up of rounds or roll mouldings.

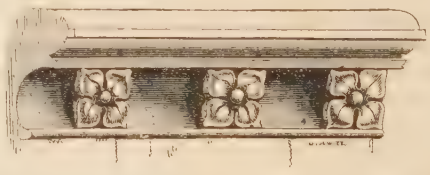
The CAPITALS are important, and form one of the most valuable marks of the style. They are often without ornament, and can then be distinguished only by their mouldings. Sometimes they have the ball-flower, and occasionally heads or human figures; but the most usual design is a wreath, or ball of foliage. In the early English style we see the stems of the foliage rising from the neck mould, or astragal, and turning over under the abacus of the capital; but in the present style we have most commonly a stem with its leaves wrapped round the bell of the capital and filling up the space like a ball. The one here given from Selby is an excellent example of the general appearance of a rich decorated capital; but the foliage is infinitely varied. Sometimes it is long and flowing, encircling the whole capital of a clustered column; but in general it is a faithful copy of natural forms, the oak, the ivy, the maple, and the vine being the plants most generally copied; and this is done with great delicacy and grace. Decorated foliage, whether of capitals, corbels, or cornices, is greatly superior to that of any other style; and nothing can exceed the skill with which it is drawn and carved.

Decorated Capital, from Selby.

ARCHES.—These are not so acute as those of the early English. The equilateral is the one most frequently used, but sometimes it is still lower. They are generally moulded, but the mouldings are in many instances bold quarter rounds, or filleted rounds, and sometimes the arches are merely plainly chamfered. In a few instances the mouldings of the arch are carried down to the ground without the intervention either of capital or impost. In large buildings vaulting shafts are carried up the pillars to support the groining of the ROOF, which is much more complicated than in the early English. Numerous extra ribs are introduced, and richly carved bosses placed at the intersections, which give it much richness and variety. Many beautiful open timber roofs of this style still remain, both in churches and houses. Stone groining is imitated in wood in cases where it would not be safe to place the weight of a stone roof on the walls.

Ball-flower, with Roll Moulding and Hollow.

The MOULDINGS and ORNAMENTS are quite as important in this as any other period, as a means of distinguishing one style from another, and fixing the date of a building. The mouldings have lost the boldness of the early English, but they have gained a greater neatness. The rounds are not so wide, and have frequently one, two, or sometimes three small fillets running along them. Another moulding, very peculiar to this style, is a round, the upper half of which projects over the lower; it is called the *roll-moulding*. There are also two ornaments which belong almost as exclusively to the decorated as the



Four-leaved Flower, with Filleted, Round, and Hollow Moulding.

zigzag to the Norman, or the tooth ornament to the early English. These are called the *ball-flower* and the *four-leaved flower*, of which examples are here given. They are used, particularly the ball-flower, in cornices, capitals, corbels, in the mouldings of doors and windows, and in every place where ornament can be used. The ball-flower is even used as crockets on the spire of Salisbury Cathedral; and the mullions and tracery of some of the windows in Gloucester Cathedral are completely filled with it.

Diaper-work is very extensively used in this style in the backs of niches, on buttresses, and for covering spaces where other ornament could not well be used.

Towards the end of the reign of Edward III. a great revolution in architecture was in progress. The change was first indicated by the introduction of straight lines among the flowing tracery of the windows, by which the beautiful freedom of their design was much impaired. This was followed by the foliage and other ornamental parts becoming more stiff and formal, and losing their truthfulness to nature.

It is curious to see how this idea of the perpendicular line and of a tendency to general squareness of form seems to have taken possession of the minds of the architects of the period; and it can only be attributed to the inherent love of variety and a desire for novelty. All things showed the approach of a change, which certainly was not the work of one man, but the effect of a pervading idea, until William of Wykeham embodied and improved the idea and brought out the new or perpendicular style, which will be the subject of a future chapter.

Of the Domestic Buildings of the fourteenth century many good specimens yet remain. They were almost all built more or less for defence; and the more exposed the situation, the more were the defences increased, until it is difficult in many cases to say whether a building should be considered a house or a castle. The saying that "An Englishman's house is his castle" was at this time *literally* true. They were mostly moated, and contained but few rooms, one of which was much larger than the rest—the hall.

Of the military strongholds, or Castles, properly so called, many of the finest we possess were built during this period; among which may be mentioned Carnarvon, Chepstow, Kidwelly, Pembroke, Windsor, Clifford's Tower, York, Warwick, &c. The masonry of these is of the most perfect description; the courses, as at Clifford's Tower, York, being laid regularly through the whole extent of the building; thus showing that in castellated as well as in every other branch of architecture the Edwardian period stands pre-eminent.

SCULPTURE AND PAINTING.

The art of sculpture was necessarily inseparable from ecclesiastical architecture. In our churches of the feudal ages the sculptured canopies, chantries, tracery, and statues are of singular merit and great poetic beauty, in many instances, and in none more than in those of this period. They make a marked advance on the prior period. Both in the early English and the decorated orders we have exquisite specimens of sculpture, spite of the huge destruction of the Reformation and the ravages of time. At York, Ely, Lichfield, Durham, Wells, and Westminster Abbey we can yet admire the labour of the sculptors of the eras of Henry III. and Edward I. In the cathedrals of Glasgow and Aberdeen, as well as in the splendid remains of Elgin and Holyrood, we have yet traces of it. The foliage, the trefoils, and quatrefoils of this period are peculiarly free, natural, and simple. In the decorated order, at decaying Croyland and Tintern, the nave at York, in the magnificent choir at Lincoln, at Beverley, Ripon, and Carlisle, as well as in the beautiful ruin of Melrose, and a few churches in Scotland, we ought not to pass over the sculpture. On many of these graceful works the monks themselves are said to have laboured, and Walter de Colchester, sacristan of the abbey of St. Alban's, is expressly celebrated by Matthew Paris as an admirable statuary.

We are assured, too, that painting was carried to a great extent in adorning our palaces and churches in this period, though we find scarcely any trace of it left. Henry III. kept several painters constantly at work, whose names are recorded, and who executed many beautiful paintings at his various palaces at Westminster, Winchester, Woodstock, Windsor, Kenilworth, &c. Bishop Langton painted the history of the wars and life of Edward I. on the walls of the episcopal palace at Lichfield. Edward III. collected by royal order painters from all quarters to decorate his palace at Westminster; and Fox, in his "Acts and Monuments," tells us that the principal churches and chapels had not only portraits of the Madonna and the saints, but the walls were extensively decorated with paintings. So that, whatever its merit, painting was much in demand in this period.

MUSIC.

Of this art as practised at this period we can only speak historically, for no proofs appear to have come down to us of the actual written music of the times. According to Sir John Hawkins, in his History of Music, though we had good writers on music in the fourteenth century, it is not till the fifteenth that we are enabled to judge of what the music of our ancestors was by actual notation. We know that both the ancient Gaul's and Britons were extremely

Dance of Fools. 13th century. From MS. 1344 in the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

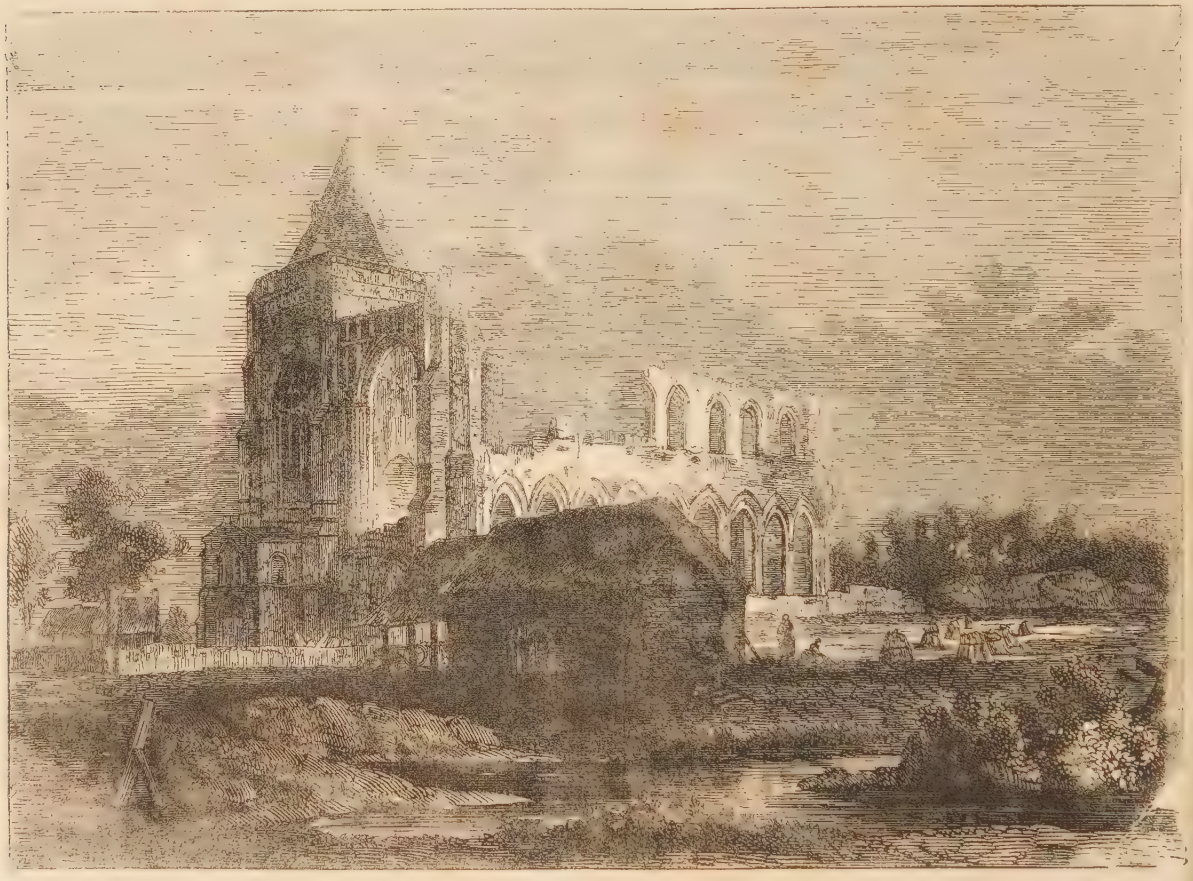
fond of music, and that at all the banquets of the nobles their minstrels accompanied their songs on the harp. The minstrel in most European countries was a union of the poet and musician. He composed his own music and sang it. For this cause he was the welcome guest at all great houses. The fame of the scalds of the North and the troubadours of the South is familiar to all readers the world over. But in our country every great baron kept his train of minstrels—as well as our monarchs—who composed songs in honour of their martial deeds, and sang them to the harp at their tables. Matilda, queen of Henry I., was, according to William of Malmsbury, so fond of music, that she expended all her revenues upon them, and oppressed her tenants to pay her minstrels. John of Salisbury declares that the great of his time

imitated Nero in his extravagance towards musicians. He says they prostituted their favour by bestowing it on minstrels and buffoons.

Rigordus says:—"The courts of princes are filled with crowds of minstrels, who extort from them gold, silver, houses, and vestments by their flattering songs. I have known some princes who have bestowed on these ministers of the devil, at the very first word, the most curious garments, beautifully embroidered with flowers and pictures, which had cost them twenty or thirty marks of silver, and which they had not worn above seven days."

Of the estimation in which minstrels were held by the Anglo-Saxons, we have a striking proof in king Alfred assuming the guise of one to explore the Danish camp. It proves that not only were the minstrels then admitted everywhere, but that the highest personages were skilled in music. Sixty years after Alfred's adventure, Aulaff the Danish king made use of the same stratagem to examine the camp of our king Athelstan. The Normans were perhaps still more addicted to music and minstrels. They brought with them all the songs sung to the glory of Charlemagne and Roland, and in the conqueror's army was the celebrated Taillefer, who, at once minstrel and warrior, asked leave to command the onset, and died fighting valiantly and singing the old songs of France.

Richard I. was not only extremely fond of minstrels, but was a distinguished one himself, and every one knows the story of his being discovered by his minstrel Blondel, in his prison in Germany. Edward I. would have lost his life by assassination during the crusades, but his harper hearing the struggle, rushed in and dashed out the assassin's brains with a tripod. We could accumulate a whole volume of such facts all through our history; but one, which shows, too, how well the musicians were rewarded, is that, Roger or Raherus, the king's minstrel in the reign of Henry I., in the year 1102, according to Leland, founded the priory and hospital of St. Bartholomew in West Smithfield, became the first prior, and so remained till his death.



Ruins of Croyland Abbey.

The first earl of Chester gave a freedom of arrest on any account to all minstrels who should attend Chester fair, and the last earl was rescued from the Welsh, who besieged him in Rhuddlan Castle, by a band of these minstrels and their followers, who rushed away from the fair for that purpose.

John of Gaunt established a court of minstrels at Tutbury in Staffordshire, traces of which remained to our own times.

In the middle ages, Du Cange says that these men swarmed so about the houses and courts of the great, and princes spent such large sums on them as completely to drain their coffers. In fact, it would appear in all ages of our history, that a singer would, as now, carry off more in one

EDWARD II. AND THE MINSTREL. (See page 470.)

season, than a popular author would in his whole life. The king in these times had accompanying him, when he went on his warlike expeditions, besides the musicians of the army, and expressly attached to his own train, fifteen or more minstrels. The nobles had often large bands of them in their houses. We read in the household book of the earls of Northumberland of the regulations for the minstrels; and Bishop Percy, one of that family, in his "Hermit of Warkworth," says:—

The minstrels of thy noble house,
All clad in robes of blue,
With silver crescents on their arms,
Attend in order due.

Trokelowe the chronicler gives us a very curious passage demonstrating at once the state assumed by minstrels at this period, and the free access which they had to the very presence of royalty. What is more, it shows that women were now accredited minstrels. When Edward II. this year (1316) solemnised the feast of Pentecost, and sat at table in royal state in the Great Hall at Westminster, attended by the peers of the realm, a certain woman, dressed in the habit of a minstrel, riding on a great horse, trapped in the minstrel fashion, entered the hall, and going round the several tables, acting the part of a minstrel, at length mounted the steps to the royal table, on which she deposited a letter. Having done this, she turned her horse, and, saluting all the company, she departed.

When the letter was read it was found to contain severe animadversions on the king's conduct; at which he was greatly offended, and the doorkeepers, being called and reprimanded for admitting her, they replied, "that it never was the custom of the king's palace to deny admission to minstrels, especially on such high solemnities and feast-days."

The harp was the great and favourite instrument, but we now find a number of others mentioned. The band of musicians in Edward III.'s household consisted of five trumpeters, one cyteler, five pipers, one tabret, one mabrer, two clarions, one fiddler, three wayghts, or hautbois. In a work of the time, quoted by Sir John Hawkins, there are mentioned the following musical instruments:—the organ, the harp, the sawtrey, the lyre, the cymbal, the sistrum, the trumpet, the flute, the pipe, the tabor, the nakyre, the drum, and several others. Some of these were used in martial, some in church music, and others in social and street music.

Chaucer mentions "a ribible," as used by his parish clerk, who must have been a merry fellow:—

In trousty manir couth he trip and daunce,
After the scale of Oxenford (Oxford) tho,
And with his legges casten to and fro,
And playing songs on a small ribible,
Thereto he song sometime a loud querrible:
And as well could he play on a giterne.

The giterne was probably the guitar, and the cyteler, or citole, mentioned by Gower, the zitern, which has always been a favourite instrument on the Continent, and has of late years been introduced into this country. Matthew Paris also speaks of musical instruments called "burdons," which were used in the church of St. Alban's, and probably in others.

Church music, we are told by the old writers, was now as ardently studied by the clergy as secular music by the minstrels and gleemen. Music was taught in all colleges, cathedrals, convents, and capital churches; and Sir John Hawkins assures us that the clergy in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries "were by much the most able musicians, as well in instrumental as vocal music." The learned Robert Grosteste, bishop of Lincoln, who we are told was also an excellent sculptor and goldsmith, was passionately fond of music as well as of fishing. He wrote a handbook for anglers, "Manuel de Peche;" and he had always a harper in the next room, and when wearied with his studies, he ordered him to play. Like Saul he thought sweet music drove away evil spirits. Being asked—

Why he held the harpe so dere?

He replied,

The virtue of the harpe, through skyle and ryght,
Wyll destroye the fendis myght,
And to the cros by gode skeyl
Ys the harpe lykened weyl.

In the churches of this time some of the public offices were considered as musical exhibitions, and were frequented for amusement rather than devotion. The clergy of the middle ages sought to amuse the people by their pageants and miracle plays, and to attract them by joyous music. To the various diversions of hunting, hawking, feasting, and dancing, which a king recommended to his daughter to chase away her melancholy, he added:—

Then shall ye go to your even-song,
With tenors and trebles among:
Your quire nor organ songe shall want,
With country note and discaunt;
The other half on organs playing,
With young children full fayn synging.

Guido Aretini's musical scale, invented in the eleventh century, had been now greatly improved by the addition of several characters for representing the various lengths of musical sounds, and music thus delineated was called *cantus measurabilis*, or measured song.

Hand organs of a rude construction were already known and to be seen in the streets of cities, but far more frequently the pipe, the tabor, and the drum, the fiddle, and even the harp, accompanying the feats of dancing dog and bear.

Dancing Bears and Monkey. 13th century. Harleian MS. 6563.

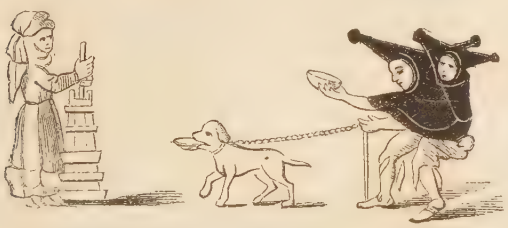
COMMERCE, COINAGE, AND SHIPPING.

Both the foreign and domestic commerce of England appears at this time to have grown and flourished, as it has continued to do almost ever since, from an innate and unconquerable tendency in the people towards trade and commercial enterprise, rather than from any fostering and judicious exertions of the government. On the contrary, in the reigns of the great Edwards the knowledge of the principles of trade appears to have been as completely absent

from the heads of those kings, as their ruinous imposts and restrictions were calculated to crush it. In the reigns of the Edwards the chief articles of export or of raw material were only allowed to be sold in certain places; and sometimes this was one place and sometimes another. Sometimes this staple or place of sale was at home, sometimes abroad. Edward II. ordered that all articles of the staple, as wool, sheepskins, and leather, should not be carried as heretofore to places in Brabant, Flanders, and Artois, but to Antwerp only. Edward III. made Calais the staple when that town was captured in 1348; and in 1353 he removed it again, and ordered wool, woolfells, or sheepskins, leather, and lead to be sold only at Newcastle-on-Tyne, York, Lincoln, Norwich, Westminster, Canterbury, Chichester, Exeter, and Bristol for England; at Carmarthen, for Wales; and Dublin, Waterford, Cork, and Drogheda, for Ireland.

This was better than our merchants being obliged to carry all these commodities abroad; but repeated changes followed this. "The condition of the merchants," says Macpherson, in his "Annals of Commerce," "who were obliged to deal in staple goods was truly pitiable in those days of perpetual changes."

But this was not all. Suddenly and arbitrarily the king, when wanting to raise money on tolls, would proclaim a fair in Westminster, and compel all the tradesmen of London to shut up their shops and carry all their goods thither. Matthew Paris tells us that when Henry III. did this, the fair lasted for a fortnight; and during that time all the fairs in the kingdom besides were suspended. He draws a dismal picture of the miseries and losses which the merchants suffered. The weather was dreadfully wet and cold. Their goods, removed from good shops to their tents, were drenched and spoiled, and they themselves were obliged to eat their victuals standing deep in the mud and wet. The people were loud in their complaints, but four years afterwards the king repeated the experiment, when it failed, for very few buyers came to it.



Woman Churning, and Blind Beggar. 14th century. From MS. in the Cotton Library.

Fairs, indeed, seemed to engross the chief domestic trade of the nation; and people came to them from different countries. A fair at St. Giles's Hill, near Winchester, continued sixteen days. As at Westminster, all trade was prohibited during its continuance, at Winchester, Southampton, and at any place within seven miles. Immense crowds from all parts of England and from abroad flocked to it. It resembled a great city, being laid out in regular streets, inhabited by foreign and domestic traders. To such fairs the kings, barons, great prelates, and gentry of the time sent their agents, or went in person, and purchased jewels, plate, cloth, spices, liquors, furniture, horses, cattle, corn, and provisions of all kinds, men and women not excepted.

One of these fairs must have been a most extraordinary sight. Bartolomeus, a cotemporary writer, assures us that men and women slaves were publicly sold in these fairs like beasts, down to the latter part of the fourteenth century.

The internal trade was not only oppressed by the arbitrary appointment of such fairs, and simultaneous closing of others, but by a host of greater and lesser impositions, called lastage, payage, passage, frontage, stallage, and others, now become unintelligible, though far too intelligible to those who were fleeced by them. Some of these taxes were demanded at every fair, and by every baron through whose domain they were compelled to pass.

Blacksmith of the 14th century. Sloane MS., 3983.

But if the internal trade of the country was thus oppressed, how much more the foreign. In 1275 Edward I. issued an order compelling all foreign merchants to sell their goods within forty days after their arrival. No foreign merchants were allowed to remain in the country longer than that time, except by special license from the king. It was not till 1303 that Edward permitted foreign merchants to come and go freely, and to reside under the protection of the English laws; and it was not till fifty years after that that they were freed from the oppressive law of being obliged to answer for the debts and offences of every other foreign resident. In 1306 a number of foreign merchants were imprisoned in the Tower, and detained there till they gave security that none of them would leave the kingdom, or export anything without the king's license.

In 1307 Edward prohibited any coin being taken out of the country. In 1335 Edward III. made a like law, prohibiting either money or plate being taken out on pain of forfeiture of all such property. Sworn searchers were appointed at all the ports; and in 1343 these regulations were repeated, and the searchers were to receive one-third of all the money or plate seized. All foreign cloths were to be reduced to the English measure; all were to be measured by the king's aldnagers, and whatever cloth was found of a less measure in length or breadth was to be forfeited.

How commerce could exist under such absurd restrictions is marvellous. Yet the advantages of trade with this country must, under all these obstacles, have been greater

than with most others, for foreign merchants flocked hither in great numbers. They were called "merchant-strangers;" and, forming themselves into companies, they soon managed to engross nearly all the foreign trade of the country. The Merchants of the Steel-yard were a most flourishing company of German merchants, who were settled here before the Conquest, but at this period were become much more opulent and powerful. This was owing to their connection with the celebrated confederation of the Hanse Towns, and to the privileges conferred on them by successive monarchs in consequence of that connection.

Then there were the Merchants of the Staple, who were established about this time. Their business was to collect the staple articles, wool, sheep-skins, leather, lead, and tin, and convey them to the staple towns. Englishmen, Irish, or Welsh might do this to the staple towns within the kingdom, but no native could be concerned in exporting them to the staple towns abroad. The great object was to enable the king to collect his customs easily, and that foreign merchants might know where to go for these articles. There were six moderators, two Germans, two Lombards, and two English, appointed to settle all disputes in the presence of the mayor and constable of the staple, for their affairs were not subject to the ordinary magistrates.

There was a mercantile company, called the Brotherhood of Thomas à Becket, which was very flourishing for a time, and afterwards was incorporated with the Company of Merchant-Adventurers, which for several centuries made a conspicuous figure.

Besides these, there were various companies of Italian merchants and usurers settled in London and various other cities. The Lombards were the most opulent, and became so hated by the people for their rapacity and as farmers of the taxes that the Wat Tyler insurgents treated them with exemplary severity. There were the Corsini from Rome, who were money-dealers, and considered as insatiable of gain as the Jews themselves. Matthew Paris says they sometimes exacted no less than sixty per cent., and that this drew upon them a severe prosecution. There were also the companies of the Peruchi and of the Scali of Florence; and the Friscobaldi and the Ballordi and Reisardi of Lucca, in Edward II.'s reign, and also in Edward III.'s. He acknowledges, too, that he was indebted to the Bardi of Florence twelve thousand marks.

The Jews, who had been so fleeced in John's reign for their wealth and usurious habits, were banished from the realm in 1290.

We now carried on trade with almost every country of Europe. Pisa, Genoa, Venice, Florence, and some other of the free cities of Italy, were at this period the great marts of the world's commerce. They dealt greatly in the silks and spices of the East, and supplied England with these articles. We had also considerable trade with Sicily, Majorca, Spain, and Portugal. We even extended our transactions to Iceland. To Flanders we sent wool, and received thence cloth. With Scotland, our wars, and the consequent national antipathy, cut off for a whole century commercial intercourse between the sister countries; and the people of Scotland appear to have traded greatly during the time with the Flemings, who came to Berwick as the nearest port, when it was a Scotch town. They took wool, hides, and sheepskins, as from England, and returned their cloths. Scottish pearls, it appears, were exported; and, during truces, cattle and salmon were brought into England, and malt and corn taken back.

Ireland even then was exporting corn and provision. Wheat, oats, malt, and ale were supplied to Edward I. by the Irish while he lay in Scotland in 1300. It appears, also, that the Irish manufactured then a kind of stuffs called *sayes*, which were woven of the finest wools, and were in great demand by the ladies on the Continent, particularly in Italy. Frieze cloth was also then made there as now, and exported to England, and cloth was made in England from Irish wool. Rymer, moreover, mentions mines of gold and silver. Altogether, the revenue derived from Ireland by England then was £10,000.

According to Macpherson's "Annals of Commerce," the total exports of England in 1384 were £212,338 5s., and the imports £38,383 16s. 10d., leaving a balance in our favour of £173,945. But Anderson in his "Annals" makes the balance in our favour more considerable, namely, £255,370.

The governments during this period were repeatedly engaged in striving against the native impulses of trade, by fixing artificial prices on labour, cattle, and various other kinds of market supplies, fowls, herrings, bread, and beer, which in all cases produced great mischief, often prevented people offering their goods on terms that would not remunerate them, but did not permanently enlighten government, though they were repeatedly compelled to repeal the absurd restrictions.

During this period coals began to be used in England, and were brought by sea to London. The monks of Dunfermline, in Scotland, also obtained leave of a neighbouring baron to dig coals for their own use in his lands at Pittencrief.

Bills of exchange were now much in use, being much encouraged by the government under the idea that they prevented money going out of the kingdom, and in 1381 a law was passed recommending, and, in fact, commanding their use in foreign transactions.

One of the most useful and creditable transactions of the reign of Edward III. was the issue of a gold coinage. The coinage of England had till this period consisted of silver, and chiefly in the form of marks and pennies; a mark being two-thirds of a tower pound, the pound not being a real coin, but a pound weight of silver coins. The shilling also was a nominal coin at this time, being the twentieth part of a pound. The penny was the two hundred and fortieth part of a pound, and there were also silver halfpence and farthings, but the people often made these by cutting the pence into halves and quarters, a practice against which various ordinances were issued. At this time a penny was called an *esterling*, or *sterling*, whence our word sterling coin.

The gold coins circulated before this period were foreign, and called byzants, or byzantines. Henry I. issued a gold coin of the weight of two silver pennies, which was ordered to pass for twenty silver pennies. The people, however, refused it, as gold being only reckoned nine times the value of silver, the king had thus made it ten times the value, which was one-tenth more than the real value. So completely did this coin disappear, that no specimen, we believe, is now known of it.

Edward I. issued in 1279 a silver coin equal to four

silver pennies, and called it a gross, or groat, that is, a great penny. Of Edward II.'s coin none are known certainly to remain, but there are a few which are surmised to be his.

Penny of Edward I.

Penny (supposed) of Edward II.

Edward III.'s new gold coinage, issued in 1344, consisted of florins, to pass for six shillings; half florins for three shillings; and quarter for one shilling and sixpence. But he had committed the same fault as Henry I., and overvalued these coins, which prevented the circulation. To remedy this error, he coined in the same year gold nobles, half nobles, and farthing nobles, valued respectively at six shillings and eightpence, three shillings and fourpence, and one shilling and eightpence. The name of noble was given to this coin in honour of his great naval victory in 1340 at Sluys, and he appears upon them completely armed in a ship with his sword drawn in his right hand. This coinage continued to circulate to the end of this period.

Groat of Edward III.

To prevent extortion in exchange of these moneys, and probably to secure a little profit to the crown, Edward took the whole matter into his own hands, appointing official exchangers in every part of the kingdom, making a profit of one and one-fifth per cent. by the transactions. The great loss to the public in these times was occasioned by the extensive clipping of the coins. To such a degree had this taken place in Edward I.'s times, that the Jews being accused as the chief offenders, he seized in one day, and hanged with very little trial, two hundred and forty-four of them. At the same time all the goldsmiths in the kingdom were seized and thrown into prison on suspicion of participation in the crime.

The rate of interest was high at this period, seldom less than ten, more often twenty per cent., and, as we have seen in the case of the Corsini, sixty per cent. The church of Rome prohibited the lending of money on usury; and yet, when the bishop of London excommunicated the Corsini, who were the papal agents, the pope protected them, or they must have suffered the fate of the Jews.

The method of coining at this time was simply by beating out thin plates of silver into a roundish form, and stamping them by a blow with a hammer. They are, of course, of rude workmanship.

The coins minted in Scotland in Edward III.'s reign were so much less in value that he prohibited their circulation, but ordered it to be brought to the mint as bullion. The old coins, however, he permitted to circulate. The first gold coins of Scotland are of the mintage of Robert II., 1371 to 1390. In Ireland there were several coinages of money, but in 1339 appeared a foreign inferior money called turnkeys, or black money, which was allowed to circulate from the scarcity of better.

The British sailors, during the period under review, greatly augmented the character for skill and bravery which they had acquired in king John's time. The great victory of Edward III. at Sluys, and their subsequent ones, placed them at the head of the maritime world. The Monk of Malmsbury before that, in 1315, had written thus of them:—"English ships visit every coast, and English sailors excel all others, both in the arts of navigating and of fighting." Whether this character at this time was quite true as regarded the skill in navigation of the Genoese, is doubtful; but in fighting, they had shown their superior valour by beating the Genoese in the French service at sea, as well as their comrades had on land. The royal navy in these reigns does not appear to have been at any time numerous. The number of the ships of war of Edward II. that we are made acquainted with was only five. Of the size of these we have no information; but as early as 1270 we read of a ship of Venice which was one hundred and twenty-five feet long, carrying one hundred and ten men. Edward III., in 1360, ordered the vessels intended to transport his troops to France to carry forty mariners, forty men-at-arms, and sixty archers. Edward's admiral and the mariners of the Cinque Ports captured no less than eighty vessels off the French coast, of which one had been purchased some years before for five thousand francs. This was a large fleet itself. But in size the Genoese vessels must have greatly exceeded the largest of these, as we read of some of them, ship and cargo, being valued at £60,000 and £70,000 each.

The large fleets of England, however, with which Edward transported his armies and fought his sea-fights, were chiefly merchant vessels, collected by the most unceremonious authority as wanted. The press-warrants of that day show us that those who executed them were empowered to seize all vessels, great and small, that were in port or that came into port; to cause them to be unloaded, if necessary; and to conduct them at once to the place of rendezvous. In this manner were speedily mustered the seven hundred and thirty-eight vessels which were drawn up at the siege of Calais, and the eleven hundred vessels with which he invaded France in 1359.

London and Yarmouth were the two great seaports of that day, and there appears every reason to believe that Edward on this latter occasion had at least half of the whole mercantile navy of England in his service. The number of English ships were found at this time to diminish rather than to increase, nor can this be any matter of wonder. These violent seizures of trading vessels, interruptions of commercial enterprises, and necessary losses of property, were enough to have destroyed the whole commerce of any less vigorous

country. Add to this, the encouragement of the *merchant strangers*, who carried on a great part of their trade in foreign bottoms, no doubt, was an additional cause of this decrease.

An event, however, took place in 1302 of unparalleled advantage to navigation—the invention of the mariner's compass by Flavio di Gioca of Amalfi. This opened up new oceans and new worlds to Europe; and already in Edward III.'s reign Nicholas de Leuna, a Carmelite friar, is said to have made five voyages of discovery towards the north pole, and presented to that monarch a description of the countries he had seen. In 1344, one Macham, an Englishman, is said to have discovered Madeira, and in 1395 some French and Spanish adventurers discovered the Canaries.

Scotland during this time must have displayed considerable maritime enterprise, for we have had to relate the bold cruise of the Scottish captain John Mercer, who made great destruction amongst the English merchant vessels, till alderman Phillpot of London encountered and took him prisoner. So bold were the Scots in 1335 and 1337, that they seized our vessels at the very mouth of the Thames; attacked and plundered Guernsey and Jersey; sailed along the southern coast of England; took a number of vessels lying at the Isle of Wight; and cruised along the eastern shore, doing great damage, till the equinoctial gales drove them home.

MANNERS AND CUSTOMS, DRESS AND DIVERSIONS.

The manners and customs which prevailed during this period bore a great resemblance to those we have described in the preceding age. Yet, by the extensive expeditions of the English on the Continent. and to the East in the crusades, various changes were introduced, and, if we are to believe the writers of the times, a great corruption of morals had taken place. Thomas Wykes, speaking of the civil wars in Henry III.'s reign, says:—"In these five years past there have been so many battles, both by land and sea, so much slaughter and destruction of the people of England, so many devastations, plunderings, robberies, thefts, sacrileges, perjuries, treacheries, and treasons, that the nation hath lost all sense of distinction between right and wrong, virtue and vice."

Bed of the 13th century. From the Frieze in Edward the Confessor's Chapel.

No nation had shown such valour as the English, but none had shown so little mercy abroad, or the wise policy which puts on a show of it. We have seen how much the first and third Edward gained by their arms, both in Scotland and France, and how they lost it all again by the reckless cruelties which they inflicted on those countries, and their total neglect of every attempt to conciliate their good-will. Froissart, who does all justice to the bravery and virtues of the English, blames them for their insolent and disgusting behaviour to people of other nations. "When I was at Bordeaux, a little before the Black Prince set out on his expedition into Spain, I observed that the English were so proud and haughty, that they could not behave to the people of other nations with any appearance of civility. Even the gentlemen of Gascony and Aquitaine, who had lost their estates in fighting for them, could not obtain the smallest place of profit from them, being constantly told that they were unfit for and unworthy of preferment. By this treatment they lost the love and incurred the hatred of those gentlemen, which they discovered as soon as opportunity offered. In a word, the king of France gained those gentlemen, and their countries, by his liberality and condescension, and the English lost them by their haughtiness."

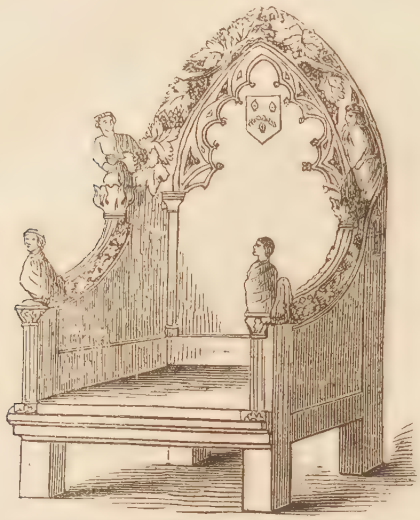
Effigy, at Dunmow, of Matilda Fitzwalter (poisoned at the beginning of the 12th century).

John of Vienne, the governor of Calais, gives the same character to the Scots of that time. "The Scots," he says, "being naturally fierce and unpolished, hated and despised the French, and gave them the most contemptuous names they could invent." This conduct has been objected to us in all ages, and seems to belong to the island.

But corruption of manners, according to all authorities, was universal in that age, and the most eminent writers agree that it proceeded more especially from the clergy. The enormous wealth drawn by Rome at that time from all countries, led to the most beastly extravagance and dissoluteness in that city, so as to originate the proverb—"The nearer to Rome, the farther from God." The celibacy of the clergy aggravated this state of things immensely; and both the corruption of the church and the increase of knowledge amongst the people were preparing the reformation. Petrarch, himself a priest, describes the effect of the papal court being removed in the fourteenth century to Avignon. "You imagine," he says, in his celebrated letters, "that the city of Avignon is the same now that it was when you

ENGLISH MERRYMAKING IN THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

resided in it. No, it is very different. It was then, it is true, the worst and vilest place on earth; but it is now become a terrestrial hell, a residence of fiends and devils, a receptacle of all that is most wicked and abominable!"



Abbot's Chair. 13th century. Sir S. R. Meyrick.

The profligacy of the clergy was so great, that there is no author of eminence who does not join in denouncing it. In Piers Plowman's Visions and Chaucer the theme comes up everywhere with the keenest satire. Piers Plowman says :—

Suche as can nat ysay their crede
With prayer should be made prelates;
Nother canne they the Gospel rede,
Suche should now weldin hie estate
There was more mercy in Maximine
And Nero that never was gode,
Than there is now in some of them
When he hath on his furred hode.
They halowe nothing but for hire—
Ne churche, ne font, ne testement;
They layith out their large nettes
For to takin silver and golde.

Pilgrim. 13th century. Fosbroke's "History of Antiquities."

And so on he runs through their long catalogue of vanities and vices. Chaucer, while he draws his beautiful picture of the good parson, still more often condemns the worldliness, impiety, and ostentation of the priests :—

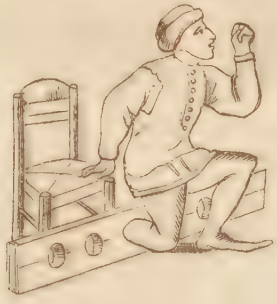
They hie on horse willeth to ride,
In glitterande golde of grete arrai,
Painted and portrid all in pride,
No common knight maie go so gaie;
Chaunge of clothing every daie,
With golden girdles, grete and small,
&c. &c. &c.

Roger Bacon, struck by the same condition of the appointed teachers of the people, observes :—"It is believed by all wise men that the times of Antichrist are near at hand."

If such were the manners and morals of the clergy, we may well suppose what was that of the people. The haughtiness and oppressions of the barons were equal to the degeneracy of the clergy. They were brave, affected great hospitality to those of their own rank, but were cruel and contemptuous to the common people. The ignorance and superstition which prevailed in all ranks till Wycliffe and the Lollards began to dissipate it, are almost incredible. Pope Innocent VI. firmly believed Petrarch to be a magician, because he read Virgil. Pilgrimages were performed to distant shrines by all ranks, and the veneration for relics had reached a wonderful height. Matthew of Paris describes Henry III. riding from St. Paul's Church to Westminster, to which he had summoned all the great men of the kingdom to see him carry a vial of the real blood of Christ, which he had received from the Knights Templars at Jerusalem, under the seals and attestations of its genuineness of the patriarch, archbishops, and prelates of the Holy Land. He says, "When the procession of all the barons, bishops, monks in thousands, and vast crowds of people was ready to set forward, the king approached the sacred vial with fear and trembling, took it in both his hands, and, holding it up higher than his face, thus proceeded under a canopy, two assistants supporting his arms. In this manner he walked on through the roads, deep in mud, his eyes fixed on the vial, or on heaven."

Saddle of the Time of Edward II. From the Collection of Sir S. R. Meyrick.

While no prince undertook any great enterprise without consulting the astrologer, the ordinary people were subject to every species of terror from omens, apparitions, and the like. The physical condition of the people was miserable, no man being able to call anything his own, except in towns; for property was seized at will by the purveyors of the kings and barons; and, say the historians of the times, the approach of the king and his court to any part of the kingdom was regarded as the approach of a hostile army. Every man collected his valuables, drove off his cattle into the woods, and made all haste to get out of reach.



Stocks. 13th century From MS. in the Cottonian Library

The administration of justice was notoriously corrupt, and the country abounded with terrible bands of robbers. This is a condition of the people which some modern historians have eulogised as superior to the condition of the people now, and which Mr. Froude is reiterating at this moment in a "History of England under the Tudors," just

now issuing from the press. We can only say, supported by the evidence of all the credible writers of the feudal ages from first to last, that it is a representation utterly false, unfounded, most delusive, and mischievous, and which whole volumes of the highest authorities might be produced to disprove. The mass of the people, in fact, were still slaves.

The style of living of the present period, however, amongst the princes and aristocracy, was most magnificent, rudely so, it is true, but lavish and lordly. The enormous establishments of Edward II. and Richard II. we have described, the household of the latter consisting of ten thousand persons. Alexander III. of Scotland, being present at the coronation of Edward I., rode to Westminster, attended by a hundred knights, mounted on fine horses, which they let loose, with all their furniture, as soon as they alighted, to be seized by the populace as their property. In this he was imitated by the Earls of Lancaster, Cornwall, Gloucester, Pembroke, and Warenne, who each paid Edward the same expensive, unprofitable compliment.

The style of living amongst the great barons is shown by the household accounts of the earl of Lancaster in 1313. That year the earl expended £7,309, containing as much silver as £21,927, or equivalent to £109,635 of our money; nay, so excessively cheap were wines and some other things, that it would now-a-days require a far greater sum than that to maintain an equal hospitality. The quantity of wine consumed in the earl's establishment in that year was four hundred and seventy-one pipes. Other earls and barons consumed in free living all the revenues of their immense estates. Towards the conclusion of this period this profuse hospitality was on the decline, and, instead of dining in their great hall with their dependents, the nobles began to dine in private parlours with a few familiar friends. But this innovation was extremely unpopular, and subjected those who adopted it to much reproach.

It appears that painted ceilings and walls in the great houses prevailed even before the reign of Henry III. Scripture and romantic subjects prevailed in these decorations. The "Painted Chamber" at Westminster was embellished in this manner. In the romance of "Arthur of Little Britain" these painted walls and ceilings are described as "done with gold, azure, and other fresh colours," which is precisely the style of the old Byzantine school.

In Henry III.'s reign they had painted glass windows, not only in churches, but in private houses, and with lattices which opened and shut. In different old illuminated MSS. we have specimens of the chairs, beds, reading desks, and other furniture. The chair of Edward the Confessor, or so called, in Westminster Abbey, still used as the coronation chair, is probably the oldest chair in the country. In Strutt and other works may be found various things of this kind copied from the old writers. The wills of our sovereigns and nobles give accounts of other articles bequeathed; and the romances of the time abound in lavish descriptions of the splendour of the palaces and halls of knights and barons. The countess of Pembroke in 1367 gives her daughter a bed with furniture of her father's arms. Lord Ferrers leaves his son his green bed with his arms thereon, and to his daughter his white bed, and all the furniture, and the arms of Ferrers and Ufford thereon. Beds of black satin, of red camora, of blue, red, and white silk, and black velvet, are mentioned. That of the mother of Richard III. was of red velvet, embroidered with ostrich feathers of silver, and heads of leopards of gold, with boughs and leaves coming out of their mouths.

Many of these beds have testers and canopies: in the will of Lady Neville, in 1385, is mentioned a "white couvrelit and tester, powdered with popinjays." Many, however, had hangings of tapestry all illustrated in needlework, with pictures of battles and great events, as well as scenes from the Bible and from the favourite romances; and Matthew of Paris tells us that Eleanor of Castile, wife of Edward I., covered the *floor* with tapestry, at which there was much scoffing.

Clocks which struck and chimed the hour are mentioned at the close of the thirteenth century, and Matthew of Paris gives us a rich idea of a cupboard of plate, containing a cup of gold, six quart standing pots of silver, twenty-four silver bowls with covers, a basin, ewer, and chasoir of silver. There are also frequent mention of silver and silver-gilt plate, dishes, chargers, salt-cellars, spoons, silver lavatories, spice-plates, knives with silver-handles, and a fork of crystal belonging to Edward I. Forks were used in Italy as early as 1330, but not till the seventeenth century in this country. Fire-screens standing on feet were in use in Edward I.'s reign, and also ornamental andirons, or fire-dogs.

King at Table. 14th century. From a Psalter in the British Museum.

The feasts at coronations of kings, the installations of prelates, the marriages of great nobles, and similar high occasions, were profuse in the number of dishes, and the guests entertained sometimes amounted to thousands. The coronation banquet of Edward III. cost forty thousand pounds of our money. At the installation of Ralph, abbot of St. Augustine, at Canterbury, in 1309, six thousand guests sat down to three thousand dishes, which cost forty-five thousand pounds of our money. At the marriage-dinner of the earl of Cornwall to the daughter of Raymond, earl of Provence, at London in 1243, thirty thousand dishes were served up. The marriage-feast of Alexander III. of Scotland and Margaret of England, held at York, in 1281 causes Matthew Paris to say:—"If I attempted to describe the grandeur of this solemnity, the number of the illustrious guests, the richness and variety of the dresses, the sumptuousness of the feasts, the multitude of the minstrels, mimics, and others whose business it was to amuse and divert the company, my readers would think I was imposing on their credulity."

Chaucer describes in his "Parson's Tale" the artificial cookery to which they had attained, and adds, "They had, excess of divers meats and drinks, boiled, roasted, grilled,

and fried." They had "mortries," and blanc-manges, "and such maner bake metes, and dish metes brenning of wild fire, paynted and castelled with paper and somblable waste, so that it is abusion to think."

The latter ornaments were what they called their "intermeats" (*entremets*). These represented battles, sieges, &c., introduced between the courses for the amusement of the guests. At a banquet given by Charles V. of France to the Emperor Charles IV., in 1378, there came a great ship into the hall as if of itself, the machinery being concealed. It came with all its masts, sails, rigging, and colours, the arms of Jerusalem flying. Geoffrey of Bouillon, with several knights armed cap-à-pie, were represented on deck. Then appeared the walls of Jerusalem, and a regular siege, assault, and conquest of the city was gone through.

As for the drinks of this period, ale and cider satisfied the common people; but a great variety of foreign wines were imported and consumed by the wealthy. Warton, in his "History of English Poetry," quotes the following enumeration of wines known and used at this time:—

Ye shall have Rumney and Malespine,
Both Ypocrasse and Vernage wine;
Montrese and wine of Greke,
Both Algrade and Despiceeke,
Antioch and Bastarde,
Pyment also, and Garnarde;
Wine of Greke and Muscadell,
Both Clare, Pyment, and Rochell

Shoes of the Time of Edward II. From the Frieze in Edward the Confessor's Chapel, Westminster.

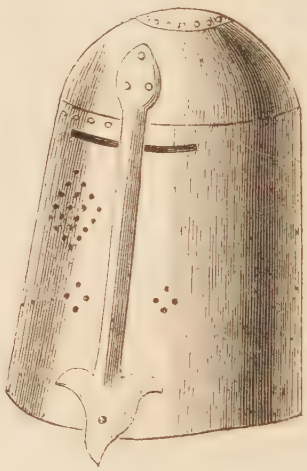
Pyment, yppocras, and claret were compounded of wine, honey, and spices of different kinds, and in different proportions; and were considered as great delicacies. People of rank had two meals a day—dinner and supper. Princes and people of high rank had a kind of collation just before going to bed, called "the wines," consisting of delicate cakes and wine warmed and spiced. It would appear by a passage in Chaucer that they ate spiced condiments after their meals, as we take a dessert.

There was eke wexing many a spice
As clove, gilofre, and licorice,
Gingiber, and grain de Paris;
And many a spice delitable,
To etan whan men rise fro table.

It is clear that those who had wealth knew no contemptible amount of the art of good living.

The costumes of this period were rich and varied. Great complaints are made by the historians of the extravagance in dress, and laws were enacted both to restrain the excesses in dressing and eating. Edward II. decreed that none of the great men of his realm should have more than two courses at their meals, each to consist of only two kinds of flesh, except prelates, earls, barons, and the greatest men of the land, who might have an intermeat of one kind. In 1363 sumptuary laws restricting dress in like manner were passed in parliament, but we are told that some of these laws were not at all regarded. "The squire endeavoured to outshine the knight, the knight the baron, the baron the earl, and the earl the very king himself."

We have examples of the different royal robes of the kings of that time in their statues. Henry III., in Westminster Abbey, has a long and very full tunic, and a mantle fastened by a fibula on the right shoulder, both devoid of ornament. But the boots are exceedingly splendid, being fretted or crossed with lines, and each square of the fret containing a lion or leopard. The cloth he wore is said to have been inwoven with gold, and on his head he wore a coronet or small chaplet of gold. Edward I. has no statue, but on opening his tomb, he was found dressed very much like Henry III., his tunic was of red silk, his mantle of crimson satin.



Tilting Helmet found at Lynn, 13th century. From an Engraving by the Antiquarian Etching Club.

Edward II. in his effigies in Gloucester Cathedral appears in a loose tunic with long streamers or tippets at the elbows, and his mantle open in front.

Edward III. appears in his loose tunic and mantle, both richly embroidered. His son William, in York Cathedral, in a close embroidered tunic and mantle with jagged edges.

The military costume changed from the chain mail of the Knights Templars in Edward III.'s time to plated armour. Sometimes the helmet was closed with a visor, and in other cases had only a protecting piece of steel down the nose called a nasal. To describe all the accoutrements, armorial bearings, on shields, crests, and banners of the knights of this period, and the armour and caparison of their horses would require a volume.

The dresses of gentlemen, in the early part of this period consisted generally of a loose, long tunic, and over that the cyclas or contoise, a sort of mantle, and when travelling a supertotus, or overall. Short dresses afterwards prevailed, with close-fitting hose and shoes. The shoes in the early

part of this time were well fitting to the foot, but afterwards assumed enormous long toes, which are represented as suspended to the knee by chains or cords, though no drawings of these suspended toes have come down to us. In Richard II.'s reign gentlemen's dresses again became long and very luxurious, often with open sides to their garments, and preposterously long-toed shoes. These were called *crackowes*, being supposed to come from Cracow, and had often their upper part cut in imitation of a church window. Chaucer's parish clerk, Absalom, "Had Paul's windows carven on his shose." The capuchon, or head-dress, in some cases resembled a simple cap, or rounded hat, in others assumed very much the character of a turban.

Mourning Costumes of the 13th century. From the Tomb of Sir Roger Kerdeston, in Reepham Church, Norfolk.

Camden's description of a dandy of the fourteenth century is particularly ludicrous:—"He wore long-pointed shoes, fastened to his knees by gold or silver chains; hose of one colour on one leg, and of another colour on the other. Short breeches, not reaching to the middle of the thigh; a coat, one half white, and the other half black or blue; a long beard, a silk band buttoned under his chin, embroidered with grotesque figures of animals, dancing-men, &c., and sometimes ornamented with gold, silver, and precious stones."

The origin of our words slop and jacket may be traced to this time, and are curious. They were both of German origin. The slop was in German *Schleppe*, a thing trailing; and, therefore, a *Schleppe-kleid* was a gown with a train. We Anglicised *Schleppe* into slop, and these slops cut short were called *Hanselines*, or *Little Jacks*, which the French rendered *Jaquette*, and thus our jacket. *Paletos* were also introduced, as well as the jacket, by John of Gaunt and the Black Prince. They are called *Paltock* by Piers Plowman, and are derived from *palla*, a cloak, and *toque*, a head-dress; so that the *Paletoque* had no doubt originally a hood like a monk's scapulary, or frock. At this time and in Richard II.'s reign, the short jackets with long wide sleeves, called *Pokys*, shaped like a bagpipe, and worn both by masters and servants, are ridiculed by the monk of Evesham as the devil's receptacles for whatever could be stolen and popped into them. Some were so long and wide, that they reached to the feet, others to the knees, and were full of slits. As the servants brought up pottage, sauces, &c., their sleeves "would go into them, and have the first taste."

The Scotch at this period dressed very much as the English, except in the Highlands. The Welsh were least luxurious of any people in the island in dress, and the common soldiers of that nation at the battle of Bannockburn are said to have been conspicuous to the Scots by the scantiness and rudeness of their clothing.

The ladies' dresses were as varied. In the earlier period they wore long dresses, and on their heads a sort of hood or cowl; but in Edward II.'s reign they adopted a most becoming style of head dress; that of simple bands or nets, supporting the hair in great elegance of form, which was

Head-dresses of the Time of Henry III.

plaited and turned up behind. It has very much of an Eastern air, and probably is of Saracen origin, brought to Europe during the crusades. Sometimes on this was worn a light sort of hood, with a silken bandage passing under the chin. Their dresses also assumed more the fashion of modern gowns. Aprons richly embroidered appeared, and the female costume of Edward III.'s time would pass very

well now; the gown fitting elegantly to the bust, and of modern proportion, but without any crinoline monstrosity. They had, however, the long narrow bands depending from the elbows, or from a little above them.

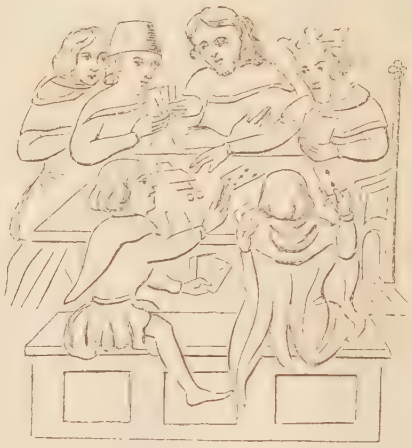
The pencil and engraver, however, can only give us a full idea of all the varied costumes of this period, which have been gleaned from illuminated works and sculptured monuments, many of which may be found well displayed in Planché's "History of British Costume."

The diversions of those ages were very much the same as those of the former one, and, therefore, need no particular description. We are surprised to hear towards the end of Edward III.'s reign that the practice of archery was on the decline amongst the people. Every man in the feudal ages in England, who did not possess land to the value of forty shillings a year, used to be required to qualify himself for a bowman; and the practice of archery in the villages, from boyhood upward, produced those famous bowmen who cleared the fields of Crecy and Poictiers of all opponents. Could it be the introduction of gunpowder and cannon which had already produced this effect. Yet Rymer says, "that art is now neglected, and the people spend their time in throwing stones, wood, or iron; in playing at the hand-ball. foot-ball, or club-ball; in bull-baiting, and cock-fighting, and in more useless and dishonest games."

Stool-ball. 14th century. Royal MSS., 20 D. 4.

Wrestling for a ram was a favourite amusement; and a wrestling-match of this kind, between London and Westminster, in 1222, terminated in a regular battle, in which much blood was spilled.

By the "dishonest games" is probably meant such games of chance as cross and pile, to which the common people were then much addicted, and in which Edward II. spent both his time and his money; for there are found in this king's accounts items of money borrowed of his barber and the usher of his chamber while at such play. Cards were invented towards the end of the fourteenth century by Jaquemin Gringonneur, in Paris, to amuse the melancholy hours of the mentally afflicted Charles VI., but they do not appear to have been so early introduced into this country.



Card-playing, from a MS. of the 14th century in the Imperial Library of Paris.

Tournaments, hunting, dancing, pageants, mummings and disguisings were the amusements of the great, even the greatest princes, and were the delectation of the people when they could witness them. At a masquerade at the court of Charles VI. in Paris, in 1388, the king and five young noblemen had dressed themselves as savages, with long hair of flax fixed to their robes by pitch, which caught fire from the torches, and the king was rescued with difficulty, while four of his companions were burnt to death.

The drama appeared in that day under the form of "Mysteries and Moralities," or "Miracle-plays," which were acted in the churches and monasteries by the clergy and monks, and in which the most sacred passages and personages of the Scriptures were introduced in the most free and extraordinary manner. In these Adam and Eve appeared without the slightest aid from the draper, and yet without seeming to give any scandal; and Noah has a terrible time of it to get his wife into the ark, and when forced in, she rewards her husband with a sounding box on the ear, to the vast delight of the most aristocratic spectators. From the clergy the drama by degrees passed over to the laity. In the streets the Tragetours, or jugglers, gave extensive amusement; and, according to Chaucer,

Horsemen Tilting. 12th century. Royal MSS. 14 E. 3

legerdemain must have reached considerable perfection, for he says the tragetours could make people believe they saw a boat come swimming into a hall; a lion walk in; flowers spring up as in a meadow; ripe grapes, red and white, appear on imaginary vines; castles, looking solid lime and stone, appear, and then vanish again.

Such is a picture of the people of England in the fourteenth century. In arms they had won eternal and unequalled fame; in poetry, literature, and art, they had made brilliant advances. Their churches were piles of glorious poetry in stone; and in poetry itself they had a Chaucer; in architecture, a Wykeham; in philosophy, Bacon and Grosteste; a number of learned historians; Wycliffe had made the Bible common property, and given religion new wings, sending it to the cottage and the dwelling of the industrious citizen. In the constitution, the Great Charter had been confirmed, and many excellent statutes passed, restraining the royal and baronial power, and extending that of the people. Gunpowder and cannon were come to change all warfare, and make strong castles useless. Manufactures had been introduced by the noble queen Philippa of Hainault. Gardens of culinary vegetables, of medicinal herbs, and of flowers, as well as *pomaria*, or orchards, were becoming general, though vineyards were fast dying out; and, altogether, it must be pronounced a distinguished and progressive era, which did its duty to the common country, and to posterity—except it were in the two important domains of morals and of humanity.

Henry IV.

CHAPTER LXIX.

Reign of Henry IV.—His Coronation—The Insecurity of his Position—Courts the Clergy and the People—Sends an Embassy to France—Conspiracy to assassinate him—Death of King Richard—Rumours of his Escape to Scotland—Expedition into Scotland—Revolt of Owen Glendower—Invasion of the Scots—The Conspiracy of the Percies—The Battle of Shrewbury, where they are defeated—Northumberland pardoned—Accumulating Dangers—Second Rebellion of the Percies with the Archbishop of York.—The North reduced—The War in Wales—Earl of Northumberland flies thither—The Plague—The King attacked by Pirates—Reduction of the Welsh—Expedition into France—Death of Henry.

THE reign of Henry IV. dates from the 30th of September, 1399, when he was placed on the throne of England by the archbishops of Canterbury and York, in the presence of the assembled parliament. Having, as we have stated, made his claim to the throne in a speech as remarkable for its disdaining to base his pretensions on the only substantial ground—the choice of the people—as for its being delivered in the English of the day, in which we have given it, a proof that the language of the country was now recognised as that of all classes, he adjourned the parliament till the 6th of October. On that day he was crowned in Westminster by Arundel, the archbishop of Canterbury, with a careful observance of all the ancient ceremonies, and some

new ones introduced to give additional effect to the title of a conscious usurper. He had the sword which he wore on landing at Ravenspur borne naked and erect before him by the earl of Northumberland; thus again asserting his title as of the sword; and he conferred the Isle of Man, which had belonged to Sir William Scrope, the earl of Wiltshire, on the earl, in fee "for himself and his heirs, for the service of carrying this sword at the present and all future coronations."

But, not content with announcing thus markedly that he intended to defend by the sword the crown which he had won by it, he also introduced an additional incident which would now-a-days be highly absurd, but which then, no doubt, was calculated to make an impression on the ignorant and superstitious populace. He had the coronation oil carried in a vessel of stone, with a cover of gold set with diamonds, which it was announced was brought from heaven by the Virgin Mary, and delivered to Thomas à Becket, with an assurance that the kings anointed with that oil would be great and victorious princes, and zealous champions of the church.

All the great barons who held by patent hereditary offices on the occasion performed their several services with apparent alacrity, and everything wore an outward air of smoothness and prosperity. Within three months Henry of Lancaster, an exile from the realm, had landed on its shores, deposed and imprisoned his rightful sovereign, and sat there the anointed king.

But he was well aware that he sat there by no single right, except that which he had so determinedly rejected—the election of the people, and that he was surrounded by a thousand elements of danger. Richard, the true king, was still alive, and, though at present unpopular with the people, had many partisans who had rather been surprised into silence than permanently satisfied. The rightful and acknowledged heir to the throne was the young earl of Marche, who, though yet only a boy of seven years of age, had powerful connections in the Percies, the Mortimers, and other great houses. This young nobleman was the direct descendant from Lionel duke of Clarence, the elder brother of John of Gaunt, the father of Henry of Lancaster. Not only was the earl of Marche the true lineal heir to the throne, but his father, Roger Mortimer, had been so declared by Richard II. by act of parliament. This youth, thus unceremoniously set aside, Henry had taken care to secure the possession of, and kept him and his younger brother in a sort of honourable confinement at Windsor.

Besides the direct claim of the young earl of Marche, Richard, earl of Cambridge, himself a son of Edmund duke of York, and married to the sister of the earl of Marche, regarded himself as injured by the invasion of the throne by Henry. The claims of the earl of Marche were not at this crisis ever mentioned by any party; and, therefore, Henry took care to keep silence on them. He did not so much as attempt to procure from parliament, when it met, an act of settlement of the crown in his family, as that would have implied a doubt of his legal right; but he elected his eldest son prince of Wales, duke of Guienne, Lancaster, and Cornwall, and he was named in parliament heir apparent to the throne.

These steps were necessary to secure his hold of the throne at home. In France he had created a determined enemy in Charles VI., whose son-in-law he had deposed, and whose daughter he, in a manner, held captive, after having deprived her of her share of the crown of England. France, accordingly, threatened vengeance, and might be expected to incite the Scots to annoyance; and, besides being under the necessity of arousing the hostility of the friends and partisans of those nobles whom he resolved to punish for past offences to his family, he knew that he had laid himself under such obligations to those who had aided his designs as would be difficult to discharge to the height of their expectations.

Henry, therefore, went craftily to work. On dismissing the parliament, he had instantly ordered the issue of writs for the assembling of a new one, returnable in six days. This necessitated the return of the very same men, for the time was far too short for a fresh election. He was certain of their obsequiousness, and would not risk a delay which might give time for the people to think, and to send up members who might at least raise difficulties. He declared that he did this for the profit of the kingdom, to spare the expenses of an election, and for the more prompt redress of grievances; but he took care to add that he did not mean this to be drawn into a precedent, to the prejudice of future parliaments and of the kingdom.

It must have been on the tried compliancy of the commons that Henry chiefly relied, for in the lords he had much disagreeable and dangerous work to do; and he found the commons as obedient as he could desire. He immediately moved the repeal of all the acts which had been levelled at his family and partisans during the late reign, and had the attainders of the earls of Arundel and Warwick reversed. But now came into play all the powerful passions of the aristocracy; the terror of some, the hopes of others, the jealousies and animosities of all. It was at once seen how needful to Henry was the support of a devoted commons. He summoned the lords who had appealed the duke of Gloucester and his associates to justify their proceedings. This was raising a storm of the most furious description. All the noblemen concerned put forward the same plea as the judges had done in the late reign, namely, that they had only acted under compulsion; that they had neither framed nor advised the appeal, but were compelled to sign it under terror of the threats of Richard. They asserted that they were no more guilty than the rest of the lords who had joined in condemning the appellants. This was touching the sore spot of the whole assembly, and the most terrible altercation arose. When lord Fitzwalter made the charge against the duke of Albemarle, twenty other lords joined in it, for Albemarle had been a notorious traitor to both sides, and twenty hoods were flung down on the floor of the house as pledges of battle in support of their assertions. The accused flung down his hood in acceptance of the challenge, and all were taken up and given into the custody of the constable and earl marshal. When the lord Morley charged the earl of Salisbury with falsehood to the duke of Gloucester, and with betraying the secrets of Gloucester to the late king, Salisbury met his accusation with a direct denial, and both cast down their gloves in pledge of battle. There was plenty of ground for attack and recrimination in the transactions of the late reign; not a man but was open to some charge or other; and the house of lords became the scene of the most violent dispute. The nobles charged each other with treason, duplicity, cowardice, and numbers of

other criminal and disgraceful actions. The coarsest and fiercest language resounded through the house; liar and traitor rose above all other abusive and rude epithets; and it is said that no less than forty gauntlets, the gages of battle, lay on the floor at once.

Nothing but the most settled purpose of vengeance on his enemies would have induced the cautious Henry to rouse such a tempest at this moment. But he was sure of the popular branch of the legislature, and, probably, he felt that division amongst the haughty barons was strength to his own hands; and that only while they were in violent repulsion from each other could he safely humiliate those whom he had in view.

When the storm was at its height Henry interposed, and while the conflicting peers were in fiery antagonism with each other he let fall his intended blow on the party which had supported Richard against his uncle Gloucester and himself. The lords appellant were stripped of the honours and estates which they had obtained from Richard as the rewards of their appeal, and the dukes of Albemarle, Surrey,

Great Seal of Henry IV.

and Exeter, the marquis of Dorset, and the earl of Gloucester, descended again to their former ranks of earls of Rutland, Kent, Huntingdon, Somerset, and lord le Despenser.

To prevent the repetition of such scenes in future, appeals of treason to parliament were prohibited, and such appeals were directed to be carried to the established courts of law. Treason itself was again limited to the offences named in the celebrated act of Edward III. The abuse introduced by Richard of delegating all the powers of parliament to a mere committee of both houses was declared unconstitutional and utterly inadmissible; and the heaviest penalties were enacted against any person but the king giving liveries to his retainers.

This practice of giving liveries had grown into a source of great public mischief and confusion. Whoever accepted the badge of any prince or nobleman bound himself to support the cause of his patron, and the patron on his part to defend him against the officials of the law, or other hostile person. Numbers of those who accepted the livery of a nobleman received no pay whatever, the equivalent being in the protection just mentioned; so that by this means a leader could maintain a large train of clients at little or no cost, and could call them together on occasion, to the evident danger of the public peace. It was highly desirable to put down this flagrant evil; but this law was as ill-obeyed as many others in those days, and the practice of distributing these liveries remained for ages afterwards.

Henry proceeded to reward his friends. As he had punished his enemies by deprivation of honours and estates, he now restored the earls of Warwick and Arundel to their former ranks and properties. He constituted the earl of Northumberland constable, and Ralph Nevill, earl of Westmorland, marshal of England; and as he had bestowed the Isle of Man on Northumberland, he now gave the earldom of Richmond to Westmorland. Besides these, he conferred many other honours, grants, and offices.

Before dismissing parliament he submitted to the lords spiritual and temporal, through the archbishop of Canterbury and the earl of Northumberland, an especial matter for their advice, and they were charged to keep the subject an inviolable secret. This was no other than the disposal of the deposed king. Henry declared, as we have already stated, that at all events he was resolved on the preservation of his life. The lords gave it as their advice that he should be placed under the custody of trusty officers, who should convey him secretly to some castle, where no concourse of people could assemble, and where he should be strictly excluded from all approach of those who had formerly been in his service. Four days after this the king went to the house, expressed his approval of the advice of the lords for the secure detention of Richard, and ordered it to be carried into instant and permanent effect.

Henry appeared now firmly seated on the throne of his unhappy cousin. There can be no doubt that it had been the dream and object of his life's ambition. His father before him, and his uncle Gloucester, had shown no equivocal signs of a desire to seize the crown of that unfortunate prince, and one after another they had usurped the actual power into their own hands. But Henry, more crafty and calculating, watched his opportunity, and had not made a decided grasp at it till he felt sure of the favour of the people. Though he had now reached the height of

his ambition, he still as carefully courted the favour of the people and the church in order to consolidate his new power. To give the people an idea of the auspicious change they had made in their sovereign, he issued a proclamation commanding all the blank bonds called *ragmans*, which had been extorted from them by Richard and his courtiers, to be made null and committed to the flames. To insure the continued favour of the clergy, he now took a very different course to that which both he and his father, John of Gaunt, had done formerly. Then they were the great champions of Wycliffe; now he withdrew his countenance from the reformers, and paid the most marked attention to the interests and ceremonies of the church, and to the persons and wishes of the clergy.

But no precautions, no subtlety of policy could give peace and security to a throne raised so palpably on injustice and treachery as that of Henry of Lancaster. From within and from without he found himself menaced by danger. France rejected his alliance and threatened war. The Scots, expecting the French to make a descent on England in favour of Richard, burst into Northumberland in one of their favourite excursions of plunder, took and destroyed the castle of Wark, and committed extensive devastations. Henry sent the earl of Westmorland to negotiate with these troublesome neighbours, and the Scots, finding no French army arrive, accepted the offered terms, and retreated to their own country.

But a conspiracy was forming at this very time in his immediate neighbourhood. The lords appellants, who had been stripped of the honours and wealth heaped upon them by Richard, though they had probably escaped, to their own surprise, with their lives, incapable of sitting down satisfied, entered into a conspiracy to assassinate the usurper. During the Christmas holidays they met frequently at the lodgings of the abbot of Westminster to plan his destruction, and the following scheme was the result of their deliberations. They agreed to celebrate a splendid tournament to be held at Oxford, on the 3rd of January, 1400. Henry was to be invited to preside, and, while intent on the spectacle, a number of picked men were to kill him and his sons.

The king was keeping his Christmas at Windsor, whither the earl of Huntingdon, the notorious John Holland, who had a particular proclivity towards murder, presented himself and gave him the invitation. Henry accepted it, Huntingdon, notwithstanding his partisanship with Richard, and his recent disgrace, being still the king's brother-in-law.

On the second of January, the day previous to the tournament, the earl of Rutland went secretly to Windsor and betrayed the whole plot to the king. It is said that Rutland had received a letter from one of the conspirators while at dinner, which his father, the duke of York, would insist on reading, and the fatal secret thus coming out, York had compelled his son to reveal the whole to Henry at once. But it must be recollected that Rutland had as fatal a tendency to treachery as Holland had to murder. He had betrayed Richard while in Ireland, and on his return in Wales, had gone over at the critical moment to Lancaster. He now again entered into a murderous plot against the new king, and then, with equal facility, he betrayed his fellow conspirators. It was an ominous mark of want of caution in the conspirators admitting him as one of their members to their secret. Henry was so well acquainted with the false nature of the man who had thus sacrificed every party that he had been connected with, that he hesitated to give credit to this story. At length, having convinced himself of the reality of the plot, he remained quiet during the day at Windsor, and in the dusk of the evening set out secretly to London.

The conspirators, who had with them the staunch friends of Richard, the earl of Salisbury and lord Lumley, assembled on the day appointed at Oxford, but were surprised to find that neither the king nor their own accomplice Rutland had arrived. Suspecting treachery, they resolved to lose no time, but to surprise Henry at Windsor, where they knew he had but a slender guard. With a body of five hundred horse they made a rapid ride that evening to Windsor, but arrived only to find that the intended victim had escaped. They were greatly disconcerted, but their partisans having joined them from Oxford, they determined to raise the standard of revolt, and to give out that Richard was at large, and at their head in assertion of his crown and dignity.

In order to give credit to their story of king Richard's escape, they dressed up Richard's chaplain, Maudelain, to represent him. Maudelain was said to be so like Richard in person and features, that every one who saw him declared that he was the king without doubt. A translation of the French account of a cotemporary, published by the Rev. John Webb in the Archæologist, says, "The conspirators had many archers with them. They said the good king Richard had left his prison, and was there with them. And to make this the more credible, they had brought a chaplain so exactly like king Richard, that all who saw him declared he was the king. He was called Maudelain. Many a time have I seen him in Ireland riding through the country with king Richard his master. I have not for a long time seen a fairer priest. They crowned the aforesaid as king, and set a very rich crown upon his helm, that it might be believed of a truth that the king was out of prison." Maudelain was supposed to be an illegitimate son of one of the royal family. He had been implicated in the illegal execution of the duke of Gloucester at Calais, had adhered to Richard through all his fortunes, and was taken with him at Flint.

The army of the insurgents increased, but it is evident that their enterprise was ill-concerted, and their counsels were now distracted. Hearing that Henry was already at Kingston-on-Thames at the head of twenty thousand men, they resolved to retire into the west. They went on, proclaiming Richard in all the towns and villages in their route, and the next evening they took up their quarters in Cirencester.

The young queen, according to several authorities, took a warm interest in this attempt. The earls of Kent and Salisbury, it is said, went to Sunning Hill, where she was staying, and told her that they had driven Bolingbroke from the throne; that her husband was at liberty, and was then on the march to meet her, at the head of a hundred thousand men. Overjoyed at this news, says Sir John Haywood, the queen put herself at their disposal, and took an extraordinary pleasure in ordering the badges of Henry IV. to be torn from her household and replaced by those of her husband.

The deception was a cruel one; but the murderer Huntingdon was not likely to be very considerate of the queen's

personal feelings. It would be enough for him that drowning men catch at straws, and that the presence of the real queen might be more effectual even than a sham king. The poor queen set out with the earls of Kent and Salisbury on their march towards Wallingford and Abingdon. She was with the barons when they entered Cirencester. But there a terrible fate awaited them. The mayor had received the king's writ to oppose and seize the traitors. He summoned the burghers and the people, and at midnight they made an attack on the quarters of Kent and Salisbury. On attempting to escape the wretched noblemen found archers posted in every street; and, after a resistance of six hours, they were compelled to surrender, and were conducted into the abbey. In the middle of the following night, however, a fire breaking out in the abbey, which was attributed to their party, they were brought out and beheaded on the spot by the populace. The women, it appears, were as zealous in seizing the insurgents as the men, and that they did not exceed the king's orders is very clear from the fact, that Henry made a grant of four does and a hogshead of wine annually to the men, and of six bucks and a hogshead of wine to the women of that town.

The unfortunate Isabella was re-conducted, strictly guarded, from Cirencester to the palace of Havering-atte-Bower, and this continued her place of residence during the tragical transactions which followed this abortive insurrection.

The fate of the other leaders of the revolt was summary and sanguinary. The earl of Gloucester and lord Lumley went into the west of England, as was proposed, but were seized and put to death by the populace at Bristol. As for Huntingdon, the accounts of his end vary. One relation says that he was seized in Essex and committed to the Tower on the 10th of January, and five days afterwards beheaded, with circumstances of great cruelty. But others, and apparently the more probable, are that he was taken in Essex and conveyed to Pleshy, the seat of the late duke of Gloucester, and, as one of those who had been associated with the late king in the treacherous arrest and murder of the duke, was put to death at the suggestion of the duchess of Hereford, the eldest of Gloucester's daughters. The tenants and servants of the late duke are described as actually tearing him to pieces with every possible act of torture, in the intensity of their hatred and revenge.

Sir Thomas Blount, Sir Benedict Shelley, Sir Bernard Brokes, and twenty-nine other knights and gentlemen were drawn, hanged, and quartered in the Greenditch at Oxford, with circumstances of aggravated atrocity. Fabyan, in his Chronicle, describes the death of Sir Thomas Blount as something not exceeded by the most fiendish tormentors. His bowels were cut out before his face and cast into a fire. While sitting in this manner he was insulted by Sir Thomas Erpingham, saying,—"Go, seek a master that can cure you." Blount only answered,—"*Te Deum laudámus.* Blessed be the day on which I was born, and blessed be this day, for I shall die in the service of my sovereign lord, the noble king Richard." The executioner then cut off his head.

Feriby and Maudelain, Richard's chaplains, were executed in London. Bishops Merks and Walden were also condemned, but Walden succeeded in satisfying Henry of his innocence, and was pardoned. Merks the king was bent on putting to death, but the pope demurred to acquiesce in the king's demand that he should be degraded from his orders prior to execution, and the delay saved him. The wrath of the king had cooled; probably he felt some of that remorse which he experienced afterwards so bitterly for the torrents of blood shed; and he complied with the pontiff's entreaty for pardon for the bishop, who had certainly shown a most noble example of fidelity to his monarch. Both these clergymen subsequently acquired Henry's favour. The faithful Merks died rector of Todenham, in Gloucestershire, in 1409.

Such was the sanguinary termination of this ill-advised and ill-conducted insurrection; a proper prelude, as Henry the historian has justly observed, "to those scenes of blood and cruelty which followed in the long contest between the houses of York and Lancaster, occasioned by the fatal ambition of Henry IV."

"But the spectacle," justly observes Hume, "the most shocking to every one who retained any sentiment, either of honour or humanity, was to see the earl of Rutland carrying on a pole the head of his brother-in-law, Lord Spenser, which he presented in triumph to Henry as a testimony of his loyalty. Rutland, soon after duke of York, was, perhaps, the most infamous man, as he certainly was the greatest traitor, of the age."

A storm still lowered in the direction of France. Charles VI. had been deeply offended by the conduct of Henry on leaving France. Under pretence of visiting the duke of Brittany, he had stolen away to make war on the son-in-law of Charles, the husband of his daughter Isabella. On hearing of the deposition of Richard, Charles was seized, it is said, with one of his frequent fits of insanity, and on recovering vowed to make instant war. The people of France eagerly seconded the intentions of the indignant monarch. Offers of military service were made by leaders of note, and troops were already on the march towards the coast. It was now that Henry, as we stated in the close of Richard's reign, made his offers of alliance. He proposed intermarriages on a most liberal scale. The ambassador was empowered to treat not only with the king, but with his uncles, paternal and maternal, for marriages to be made between the prince of Wales, his brothers and sisters, and the children, male or female, of the king of France, or his uncles. Charles peremptorily refused to receive the ambassador, disclaiming all knowledge of Henry as king of England.

But soon after this Charles of France received what he considered satisfactory news of the death of Richard, and sent Blanchet, his *maistre des requestes*, to announce that he should not disturb the truce made in the lifetime of his dear son Richard, but demanded the immediate restoration of Isabella with her dower and jewels. The French commissioners were, however, instructed not to call Henry king, but to speak of him, in addressing the English envoys, as "Le seigneur qui vous a envoyez," the lord who has sent you, and in writing, "La partie d'Angleterre," the English party.

Nothing at this time resulted from the endeavours to obtain Isabella, as Henry was not only anxious to marry her to his son, the prince of Wales, but was very poor, and had no intention of returning the two hundred thousand francs of dowry, or the jewels. France on its part, though professing to maintain the truce, did not omit what appeared a favourable opportunity to deprive England of her

remaining possessions in that country. The people of Guienne were greatly excited at the news of the deposition of Richard. He had been born amongst them, and a strong sympathy existed there in his favour. With all the warm feeling and imagination of the South, they now pictured him to themselves as all goodness. To them, indeed, he had been distant, and his rule, compared with that of the French, mild and indulgent. They uttered the most fervent imprecations on the heads of the Londoners, who, they said, had effected his ruin, and protested against submission to the usurper.

This was a temper precisely such as suited the French desires of acquisition in that quarter. The duke of Burgundy, then all powerful, owing to the unhappy and continually recurring mental malady of the king, proposed to invade the English provinces. Accordingly he marched upon Guienne, while the duke of Bourbon appeared on another part of the frontiers, issuing proclamations, and offering most flattering conditions to the people to induce them to throw off their allegiance to the English, and unite themselves to France.

But this, instead of the effect anticipated, acted upon the Gascons as a direct sedative. The inhabitants had only to look on their own cities and lands and then on those of the French to perceive that they would lose infinitely by the change. In the time of Charles V. it had been widely different. Then the English under the Black Prince had been haughty, and, owing to the demands for their perpetual campaigns, exacting and oppressive; while Charles the Wise had politicly endeavoured to spare his own subjects, and thus to allure those of the English to revolt. Now all was changed. The unhappy reign of Charles VI., who was continually falling into fits of derangement, which gradually enfeebled his intellect, gave boundless scope for the contentions and assumptions of his powerful kinsmen, and left the country exposed to their pillage. The treasury of France was exhausted. The government was poor and rapacious, and his uncles were arbitrary and merciless in their impositions. The whole of France was drained by every species of tax and arbitrary tallage, which were levied three or four times a year by the collectors with military bands at their backs. M. Thierry, in his History of Guienne, has drawn a dismal picture of this period in the provinces bordering British Aquitaine, which is fully supported by the account of Froissart. The Guiennese said, "No; we are much better off as we are. The English leave us in possession of our liberties and our property; if we unite ourselves to the French, we shall get French treatment. No, that would not do for us. True, the Londoners have deposed king Richard and set up king Henry; but what matters that to us? So long as the king leaves us as we are, with our trade with England in wine, wool, and cloth, we are much better off than plundered by the French." So greatly had the public feeling in Guienne changed since the days of the Black Prince and his desolating expeditions.

Owen Glendower's Oak, near Shrewsbury.

These dangers from abroad being thus happily dissipated, a movement was made by the royal council, undoubtedly originated by Henry, for ascertaining the fate of the deposed king. The late insurrection had shown the perils resulting from the presence of the true king—though in strict concealment—to the usurper. So long as Richard remained alive would attempts be made by his partisans to restore him; and however popular Henry might be for a time, he was too well versed in human nature not to be aware that any cause of offence on his part, any heavy imposition or restriction of liberty, however necessary, would immediately turn the public mind to the dethroned monarch, and operate in his favour. These considerations, we have every reason to believe, had led to

THE RETURN OF THE DOUGLAS ACROSS THE BORDER.

his immediate destruction. From the day that he had been left in the Tower after his formal abdication, the most profound mystery had covered his existence. There were many stories of his being, like Edward III., conveyed secretly from one castle to another by his keepers. It was said that he had been kept some time in Leeds castle in Kent, and thence removed to Pontefract. But no one really knew where he was, or how he was treated. But now news had reached the court of France that Richard was really dead, and the council of Henry, as if of their own accord, placed a minute on their book to this effect:—"It seemeth expedient to the council to speak to the king, that in case Richard, lately king, &c., be still alive, he be put in safe keeping, in conformity with the advice of the lords; but if he be departed this life, that then he be *shown openly to the people*, that they may have the knowledge of it."

The answer to this, as intended, was the showing openly the body, which was brought up from Pontefract castle with considerable funereal pomp, namely, in a carriage drawn by two horses, one placed before the other. The carriage was covered with black cloth, having four banners emblazoned with the arms of St. George and St. Edward. It was attended by a hundred men all clad in black, and was met on its approach to the city by thirty Londoners dressed in white and bearing torches. King Henry himself walked in procession, bearing a corner of the pall.

But this public exposition, so far from having satisfied the public mind of Richard's death, was the fruitful source of continued rumours of his existence, and perpetuated the very effects which Henry intended it to dispel, repeated revolts for his restoration. So strong was the belief that Richard was still alive and even at liberty, and that this was a mere mock funeral, and the corpse that of some other person, that in our own time Mr. Tytler, in his History of Scotland, vol. vii., p. 279, has taken up the theory, and produced new and curious evidence in its favour. It will explain much that we shall meet with in this reign to take a cursory review of this evidence.

The accounts of Richard's death, given by cotemporary writers, are chiefly three. Walsingham asserts that he died in Pontefract castle on the 14th of February, 1399, from voluntary starvation, having fallen into a profound melancholy on hearing of the failure of the insurrection on his behalf, and the execution of his half-brother, John Holland, and the rest of his friends. Thomas of Otterburn confirms this account, except that he adds that Richard being persuaded at length to take food by his keepers, found the orifice of his stomach closed from long abstinence, and perished in consequence. The chronicle of Kenilworth, the chronicle of Peter de Ickham in the Harleian collection, and Hardyng assert that he was starved to death by his keepers.

The story of his assassination by Sir Piers Exton and his eight ruffians is found in a French manuscript work in the royal library at Paris, and is repeated by Fabyan, Hall, and Haywood. The account of Fabyan is that followed by Shakespeare, which has given it a firm and world-wide hold on the public mind. All these accounts concur in the fact that the murder of Richard, in whatever shape it took place, occurred in Pontefract castle. Tradition has had but one constant voice, also fixing it there, and in 1643 three gentlemen of Norfolk visiting that castle record that they were shown the highest of seven towers, called "the round tower," as the one in which Richard fled round a post in combat with his butchers; and they add, "Upon that post the cruel hackings and fierce blows do still remain."

The reasons for rejecting all these accounts brought forward by Mr. Tytler are these. In the first place, the public at the time were extensively of the opinion that the body shown as Richard's was not his, but most probably that of Maudelain, his kinsman and chaplain, a man so strikingly resembling him, that we have seen the conspirators led him forth with them to personate the king. There was nothing shown of the body but the face, and that only from the eye-brows to the chin. Undoubtedly there were strong reasons of some kind for this concealment. If the body were Maudelain's, though the features might bear out the resemblance, the hair would dispel the illusion, for Richard's was well known from its peculiar yellow hue. No hair was visible, and, so far, the idea of the substitution of another corpse was favoured. But the concealment of the head was equally suspicious, even were the body Richard's. It showed that there was something there which could not bear examination. If Richard died by violence, there would be upon the head the traces of it. That there was something to conceal was further strengthened by the fact that Henry did not allow the body to be deposited in the royal vault at Westminster, nor in the vault of the Black Prince, Richard's father, at Canterbury, but had it privately conveyed to Langley, a favourite retreat of Richard's, and buried there in the monastery of the preaching friars, as more out of the way of inquiry and research.

Since Mr. Tytler has produced his evidence in favour of Richard's escape, the condition of the supposed body of Richard, on the opening of his tomb, has been referred to as proof that the story of his death by Sir Piers Exton could not be true. The scull exhibited no decided fracture, but the suture above the os temporis was open, and that might certainly have been produced by the stroke, and the os temporis be covered at the time of the exposition of the body by the bandage. That it could not, however, be the body of Maudelain was sufficiently clear, as the head had not been severed from the body by the axe, as Maudelain's was.

It might, therefore, really be Richard's body, and the death be as related; namely, by Exton and his assassins. The evidence for Richard's escape to Scotland brought forward by Tytler is this:—Bower, or Bow-maker, the continuator of Fordun, and one of the most ancient and authentic of our historians, says that Richard II. found means of escape from Pontefract castle; that he succeeded in reaching the Scottish isles, and travelling in disguise through those remote parts, was accidentally recognised when sitting in the kitchen of Donald, lord of the Isles, by a jester who had been educated at the court of the king. He adds that Donald sent him under the charge of lord Montgomery to Robert III., with whom, as long as the Scottish monarch lived, he was supported as became his rank; and that, after the death of this king, the royal fugitive was delivered to the duke of Albany, then governor of Scotland, by whom he was honourably treated; and he concludes this remarkable sentence by affirming that Richard at length died in the castle of Stirling, and was buried in the church of the preaching friars on the north side of the altar. In the events of the year 1419 the same historian

has this brief entry:—"In this year died Richard, king of England, on the feast of St. Luke, in the castle of Stirling."

Andrew Winton, the author of a rhyming chronicle, who wrote before Bower, also relates the same story, with some additional incidents; namely, that Richard was placed by Henry in the custody of two gentlemen of rank and reputation, named Swinburn and Waterton, who took compassion on him, connived at his escape, and spread the report of his death. Mr. Tytler, by application to the present descendants of those gentlemen, has learnt that it has always been a tradition in the family of Mr. Waterton, the well-known naturalist, that his ancestor, Sir Robert Waterton, master of the horse to Henry IV., had Richard II. in charge at Pontefract.

Sir Robert was steward of the honour of Pontefract; and what is a curious circumstance, in 1405 the earl of Northumberland seized and kept Sir Robert Waterton in close confinement in the castles of Warkworth, Alnwick, Berwick, and elsewhere; and that the earl of Northumberland afterwards entered into league with Robert of Scotland to maintain the cause of king Richard.

In an ancient manuscript in the Advocates' Library, at Edinburgh, Mr. Tytler finds that "Henry Percy, earl of Northumberland, with his nephew Henry the younger, came to king Richard, at this time an exile, but well treated by the governor." The same manuscript gives the account of his death, and adds his Latin epitaph, which was still remaining on the tomb in the time of Boece, who quotes it. On examining the accounts of the chamberlain of the duke of Albany, signed after the death of Robert III., and while James I. was a captive in England, Mr. Tytler finds four several entries in the years 1408, 1414, 1415, and 1417, stating the expenses of maintaining king Richard of England at the annual cost of one hundred marks a year, in total of £733 6s. 8d.

Mr. Tytler then reminds us of the fact that all those who insisted on king Richard being still alive, were summarily despatched whenever they fell into the hands of Henry. Walsingham states that the year 1402 absolutely teemed with reports of Richard being alive, and a priest of Ware was put to death by Henry for affirming it. Then eight Franciscan friars were hanged at London for obstinately maintaining that this was true. Walter de Baldock, prior of Launde, in Leicestershire, was hanged for publishing the same story. Sir Roger de Clarendon, a natural son of the Black Prince, and one of the gentlemen of the bedchamber to Richard II., along with his armour-bearer and page, was condemned and executed for the same offence. Still more, the celebrated lord Cobham, the chief of the Lollards, on his trial in 1417 refused to plead, denying the authority of the court before which he was arraigned for heresy, saying, "He could acknowledge no judge amongst them so long as his liege lord, king Richard, was alive in Scotland." Mr. Tytler rests much weight on the position and character of lord Cobham, whose integrity was of the highest kind, who had sat in parliament, and held high office under Richard, Henry IV., and Henry V.; and must, he contends, have had ample opportunity for ascertaining the truth.

Finally, Mr. Tytler shows that when Sir David Fleming was in possession of the person of the asserted king Richard, Henry IV. entered into a secret correspondence with that gentleman, and granted him a passport for a personal interview: that Henry was about the same time carrying on private negotiations with lord Montgomery, to whom, as we have stated, Richard had been delivered by the lord of the Isles, and with the chaplain of the lord of the Isles also.

Such are the chief points of the case brought forward by the ingenious historian of Scotland; and certainly they are strong and curious, but they fail to carry conviction to our minds. The pretended king Richard was no impostor; for he was asserted by others to be king Richard; but he uniformly denied it himself. He was positively declared by the former jester of king Richard to be that king, and also by the sister-in-law of the lord of the Isles, who declared she had seen him in Ireland.

This supposed Richard is declared by Wynton "to have seemed half-mad or wild, from the manner in which he conducted himself," and therefore it was supposed that he had lost his understanding through his misfortunes. Though we are told that lord Percy and other noblemen came to him, we are also informed that he would not see them. Yet for seventeen years, at least, was this mysterious personage maintained at the court of Scotland as the veritable king Richard. But it appears that he was kept in the closest seclusion. Now, had the king of Scotland been confident that he had the real king Richard, nothing could have strengthened him so much against his enemy of England as to have let all those English noblemen and gentlemen who were familiar with Richard have the fullest opportunity of verifying him. As such was not the case, we may fairly infer that there were sufficient reasons for avoiding this test, and that the pretended Richard was what he was called by Henry of England in his proclamations, the *mamuet*, or puppet, which it was convenient for Scotland to play off against England, whenever it was useful to stir up an insurrection. Still, there is sufficient semblance of a fact in the case to make it one of those which will always stimulate curiosity, and give occasion for the exercise of a subtle ingenuity, without the chance of a positively decisive proof.

The king of Scotland lost no time in putting into play this story of the flight of king Richard to his court. The news of it was spread amongst the disaffected in various quarters of England, and the Scots prepared to make a descent on the country under advantage of the internal dissension produced. There were other motives which added piquancy to the enmity of the Scots and English. Robert III. was becoming old and feeble, and the duke of Albany, his brother, one of the most ambitious and unprincipled men that ever lived, possessed the chief power, and gave every possible encouragement to the English adherents of Richard. On the other hand, Henry, recollecting the taunts of degeneracy which had been cast upon his predecessor because he was of a pacific turn, determined to gratify the taste of the nation for military fame. It suited him in every way, except in a pecuniary point, for he was very destitute of funds; but it was calculated to divert men's minds from dwelling on the means by which he had risen to the throne, and gave them one great object o interest and union. The condition of Scotland, torn by powerful factions, and ruled by a weak and failing king, was favourable to his plans, and an expedition thither was the more grateful to his feelings, as it afforded him a hope of punishing the country which gave refuge to his enemies.

He announced his intention to parliament, but it did not encourage the idea of imposing new taxes. He then called a great council of the peers, spiritual and temporal; and these consented to a partial resort to the ancient feudal system, which had for some time been falling into desuetude, that the barons should assemble their retainers and follow the royal standard at their own cost; while the prelates and dignitaries of the church should give the king a tenth of their incomes. Henry next summoned all persons possessed of fees, wages, or annuities, granted by Edward III., the Black Prince, Richard II., or the duke of Lancaster, to meet him at York, under the penalty of forfeiture; and from the banks of the Tyne, where he arrived in the beginning of August, he despatched heralds to king Robert and the barons of Scotland, as his vassals, to meet him on the twenty-third of that month at Edinburgh, there to do homage and swear fealty to him as the paramount lord of Scotland, which, he modestly asserted, all former kings of Scotland had done to the kings of England from the days of Brute the Trojan.

He marched to Leith without opposition, but the castle of Edinburgh was in the hands of David, duke of Rothsay, the king's eldest son, who sent Henry a contemptuous defiance, offering to do battle with him, with one, two, or three hundred Scottish knights against the same number of English. Henry received the proposal with an equal affectation of contempt, and waited some days for the approach of an army under the duke of Albany. But he waited in vain, for that astute nobleman took care not to engage a force which famine was fast defeating for him. Provisions became unattainable, and Henry was compelled to retreat to the borders.

The expedition was far from equalling the prestige of those of his predecessors, especially the Edwards I. and III., but at the same time it must be allowed that it far exceeded them in humanity. Whether the real motive were humanity or policy, it was in effect both. His protection was instantly afforded to all who sought it, and the royal banner displayed from tower or steeple was a signal that no violence or plunder of the inhabitants was permitted. Thus he mitigated the terrors of war, and set an example of moderation to both friend and enemy, such as had hitherto been unknown in European warfare.

Henry was hastily recalled from the borders of Scotland by a formidable revolt in Wales. There a new enemy, and a most troublesome one, had been needlessly provoked by the injustice of a nobleman, lord Grey de Ruthyn. Lord Grey, who had large estates in the marches of Wales, appropriated a part of the demesne of a Welsh gentleman, Owen ap Griffith Vaughan, commonly called Owen Glendower, or Owen of Glendowerdy. In his youth Owen had studied the law in the inns of court; was called to the bar, but afterwards became an esquire to the earl of Arundel; and then, during the campaign in Ireland, to Richard II., to whom he was much attached. When Richard was deposed Owen retired to his paternal estate in Wales, where the aggression of lord Grey took place. Lord Grey was closely connected with the new king; Owen was an adherent to the old one; and this probably encouraged lord Grey to attempt the injustice. But Owen Vaughan was possessed of the high spirit and quick blood of the Welsh. He disdained to submit to this arrogant oppressor. He petitioned the king in parliament for redress, but met with the fate which was only too probable from a poor partisan of the fallen king in opposition to the powerful one of the reigning dynasty. Though his cause was ably pleaded by the bishop of St. Asaph, his petition was rejected, and Owen, who boasted that he was descended from Llewellyn, the last of the ancient princes of Wales, boldly took his cause into his own hands, and drove lord Grey by force of arms from his lands. The indignant nobleman appealed to Henry, who embraced his cause, and issued a proclamation at Northampton on the 19th of September, 1400, commanding all men of the nine neighbouring counties to repair instantly to his standard, to march into Wales and reduce Glendower, who was declared a rebel. The fiery patriot, burning with indignation at this gross injustice, the very day that the news of it reached him, rushed forth, burnt lord Grey's town of Ruthyn, declared himself prince of Wales, and called on his countrymen to follow him and assert the liberty of their country. The spark was thrown into the magazine of combustible material of which Wales was full, for it was crushed but not contented. The people flocked from all quarters to Owen's standard. They admitted his claims to the princedom of the country without much inquiry, for they saw in him a champion and a deliverer from the English yoke. Owen's superior education in London inspired them with profound respect, and hence their opinion that he was a potent magician, possessing dominion over the elements. Henry marched against him, but Owen retired into the mountains, and the king was compelled to return.

The remainder of the year was spent in negotiations for the return of queen Isabella to France. This return had hitherto been delayed by the anxiety of Henry still to obtain her for his son the prince of Wales; but Isabella, as well as her relatives, is said to have stood firm not to listen to any alliance with the family of her husband's murderer. In the following year, 1401, Henry concluded a treaty of marriage between Louis of Bavaria, the eldest son of the emperor of Germany, and his eldest daughter, the princess Blanche, to whom he gave a portion of forty thousand nobles.

This done, Henry marched once more against the Welsh, who continued to assemble in still greater bodies under the banner of Owen Glendower, and make inroads into England, plundering and killing wherever they came. Twice in this year Henry took the field against them, but on his approach they retired into their mountains and eluded his pursuit. As regularly as he returned, they again rushed down into the champaign country, and in one of these incursions in Pembrokeshire, Owen gained a considerable victory, thus raising his reputation and augmenting his force.

Wearied by these fruitless attempts to subdue the insurgent Welsh, Henry returned towards the end of the year to London, but found as little repose or satisfaction there. Secret enemies were around him, treason dogged his steps into his very chamber, and he was very near losing his life by means of a sharp instrument of steel, having three long points, which was concealed in his bed.

In 1402 Henry was at length reluctantly obliged to relax his hold on the young queen Isabella. When Charles VI., her father, recovered his sanity for a time, he sent the count d'Albret into England to demand an interview with Isabella, in order to ascertain the real condition

in which she was kept, and to demand her release with her dower and jewels, according to the marriage contract with Richard. The ambassador found the king at Eltham, who received him and his suite with great hospitality, gave ready access to the young queen on condition that neither the ambassador nor any one accompanying him should speak of Richard of Bordeaux to her. He declared that she should possess the most perfect security and every comfort, state, and dignity which was due to her rank and position; but he did not seem the more prepared to yield up the desired princess. His council, however, ventured to take a different view of the matter. They suggested that as no accommodation respecting her marriage with the prince could be effected, it was time that she should be given up to her friends. That as she was but of tender age, she could not of right claim revenue as a queen dowager of England, but that it was fitting that she should receive back again her dowry and her jewels, with all the other effects which she brought with her.

On this point Henry demurred, and submitted to the council whether he were really bound by the engagements of his predecessor. The council, with an evidently growing firmness, decided that he was. But Henry pleaded another difficulty. He had, it came out, actually taken possession of the young queen's jewels, and distributed them amongst his six children; the prince of Wales, though he could not have the lady, being consoled with the largest share of her spoils. Henry announced to his council that his children were all absent, but that he had written to them commanding them to give up the jewels of "their dear cousin, queen Isabella," and they were to be sent to London.

If the poor young queen waited for them she waited in vain; for we find that she actually was compelled to take her leave stripped of everything except her silver drinking cup, a few silver saucers and dishes, and some pieces of old tapestry. Nothing in the whole reign of Henry is more characteristic of the grasping and unjust nature of the man, even in such small matters as a lady's jewels, finding in himself no capability of arousing a generous feeling within him. He was pre-eminently of a cold, unimpassioned, acquisitive nature. He excused himself from making restitution of her dowry on the plea of a great debt still owed by France to this country for the ransom of king John, and deducted the amount as a great favour, and with all the punctual scrupulosity of a scrivener. But the jewels were never returned or accounted for, as we shall presently hear from her indignant kinsmen.

In other respects the unfortunate and amiable young queen seems to have been sent home with all due state and respect. She was accompanied from her residence, Havering-atte-Bower, to London, by the duchess of Ireland and the countess of Hereford, the mother of the duchess of Gloucester, and by Eleanor Holland, the widow of Roger, earl of Marche, and mother of the young earl, the rightful heir of England. Besides these princesses there were the ladies Poynings and Mowbray, and seven maids of honour, in addition to her own suite of French gentlemen and ladies. She was escorted by the bishops of Durham and Hereford, the earl of Somerset, half-brother of Henry, four knights bannerets, and six chevaliers.

It is said that still Henry was most unwilling to let her go, and that both he and his son did all in their power to bend her inclination, but in vain. At length, in July, Sir Thomas Percy was appointed to conduct her across the channel, and deliver her into the hands of her friends. This took place at Leulinghen, a town betwixt Calais and Boulogne, on the 26th of July, 1402. Isabella was at this time nearly fifteen, strikingly handsome, and extremely amiable. Every one is said to have parted from her with regret, and, on the other hand, she was received by her royal relatives and countrymen with an enthusiasm which probably had as much design as affection in it, for they wished to mark the contrast between the sordid behaviour of Henry and their own. She was overwhelmed with rich presents, as if to make amends for the widowed destitution in which she returned, and her uncle, the duke of Orleans, who was anxious to secure her for his son, outdid every one else in his liberality. He was not satisfied with this, but sent a letter to Henry, upbraiding him in the severest terms for his meanness, for his murder of Richard, and challenging him to mortal combat. This was not the only epistle which Henry received from France in the same strain, for the count Walleran de Ligny and St. Pol had written to him before the queen arrived, and sent his heralds with his letter into England, also defying him, and protesting that he would everywhere, on land and sea, do him all the harm that he possibly could.

Henry was stung to answer these missives in a similar strain, but they did not prevent him still cherishing the idea of yet securing Isabella for his son. In 1406, if we are to believe Monstrellet, he made singular offers for this purpose, but the duke of Orleans declared in the council that the hand of Isabella was now promised to his son, Charles of Angoulême. To this young prince the widowed queen of England was married, and died in childbirth in September, 1410. Such was the last of the fortunes of king Richard and his little queen; and it has been well argued that nothing is so decisive in proof of Richard being actually dead as the pertinacity of Henry to obtain Isabella for his son's wife, as he certainly would not have done this had he known that Richard was living, for it would have illegitimatised the issue of the marriage, and the claim of succession to the throne.

Meantime the revolt of Owen Glendower had been acquiring strength. Not only did the Welsh, amid their native mountains, flock to his standard, but such of them as were in England left their various employments and hastened back to join in the great effort for the independence of their country. Not only labourers and artisans, but the apprentices in London and other cities caught the contagion, and went streaming back. The students left the universities, and the commons at length presented themselves before the king, representing to him how all these various classes of men were hastening to Wales laden with armour, arrows, bows, and swords. Owen took the field early, engaged his original adversary, lord Grey, defeated and made him prisoner on the banks of the Vurnway. Sir Edmund Mortimer, uncle to the young earl of Marche, collected all the friends and vassals of the family to prevent the devastation of their lands. They mustered twelve thousand, with whom they attacked Glendower near Knighton, in Radnorshire, but were defeated, and Sir Edmund was made prisoner, with a loss of eleven hundred of his men. At the same time the young earl himself, who had been allowed by Henry to retire to his castle of Wigmore, though a mere

boy, took the field, but was also captured by Glendower, and carried into the mountains.

Henry, who had the strongest reasons for wishing the Mortimers out of his way, we may suppose was by no means displeased at their seizure by Glendower; and this was sufficiently evident, for he refused to allow the earl of Northumberland, who was closely allied to the Mortimers, to treat for their ransom with Glendower. Still, Henry put forth all his vigour to reduce the Welsh chieftain. He entered Wales at three different points; his son, the prince of Wales, leading one division of the army, the earl of Arundel the second, and himself the third. The prince of Wales pushed into the heart of the mountains with a bravery which was the herald of Azincourt. He reached the very estate of Glendower and burnt down his house, and laid waste his property, but Glendower kept aloof on the hills till he saw young Henry retire, when he poured down like one of his native torrents, and carried desolation in his rear. The English armies found it impossible to come to close quarters with these enemies, and equally impossible to procure provisions. The weather was insupportable. The rains descended in incessant deluges, the tempest tore away the king's tent, and everything appeared to confirm the ideas of the people, and indeed of cotemporary historians, that Owen Glendower, by the power of necromancy, could "call spirits from the vasty deep," and bring the elements in league against his foes. Henry was compelled to return baffled from the contest.

The news which reached the king from Scotland was equally extraordinary. It was that king Richard was alive and residing at the Scottish court, and about to invade England at the head of a large army. The king issued repeated proclamations against the propagation of these rumours, and it was now that he put to death Sir Roger Clarendon, the natural son of the Black Prince, the nine Franciscan friars, and several other persons for disseminating this account. But his efforts only added force to the popular belief. The circumstance most in his favour was the distraction of the Scottish court, where a most terrible tragedy had been the consequence of the criminal ambition of the duke of Albany, the king's brother.

Robert III. had never been a martial monarch, owing to a kick which he received in his youth from a horse, which left him very lame. He was of peaceful habits, a religious and just temperament, but of feeble mind, and readily influenced by those around him. His aspiring brother, the duke of Albany, had taken advantage of these circumstances to grasp the whole power of the state in his hands.

David, the duke of Rothsay, the eldest son of Robert, was, like the son of Henry in England, gay and dissipated. He was at the same time brave, generous, and honourable, and, therefore, the more liable to be entrapped by the crafty arts of Albany. The king and queen were anxious to have their son well married, but Albany prevailed on them to select a wife from a Scottish house which would pay the largest dower. On this disgraceful principle, he sought to degrade the prince; and make him enemies. He succeeded completely. George, earl of March, not the English Marche, made the most ample offer for the honour of this connection with royalty. The prince was said to have his own attachment, but that was by no means consulted. When, however, the match was arranged with the daughter of the earl of March, Archibald, earl of Douglas, the most powerful and overbearing baron in Scotland, felt himself aggrieved, and determined to place his own daughter as Rothsay's wife on the throne. Earl James, his predecessor, had married the king's sister, and he was resolved that no subject but himself should hold the same relation to the crown. He outbade March, the duke of Albany gave him the preference, the alliance already arranged was broken off with March, and Mariell Douglas was married to Rothsay.

It was not to be expected that such a marriage should be an auspicious one. Rothsay, loved another, and not only hated but despised his wife, who is said to have been at once plain and hard, with all the towering pride of her family. Rothsay not only neglected, but ridiculed her amongst his dissolute companions. The injury sunk deep in the minds of the younger Douglases, and was not to be forgiven. All this was so much gain to the plans of the base Albany, who had long determined at any cost to clear Rothsay out of his own path to the throne. For some time the impediments to this murderous career were too great. The queen had for her advisers the old earl of Douglas, Archibald the Grim, and Trail, the archbishop of St. Andrews. By their united authority and counsels they restrained both the wildness of Rothsay, and the ambitious schemes of Albany. But after the death of these three beneficent guardians, with whom, says Fordun, it was commonly said through the land, that the glory and honesty of Scotland were buried, the duke of Rothsay plunged once more into his excesses, and it was advised by Albany that he should be put under some degree of restraint. In an evil hour the old king listened to this, and the fate of Rothsay was sealed.

Amongst the duke's companions was a Sir John Ramorgny, the most accomplished villain of his time. His education was of the most complete character for the age, for it seems he had been originally intended for the church, but the profligacy and reckless spirit of his youth had disqualified him, and he had become first a soldier and then a diplomatist. His handsome person, his fascinating manners, the insinuating address and grace of his demeanour, which covered no single spark of conscience or principle, peculiarly fitted him to be the supple tool of princes. He was accordingly employed by Albany in state negotiations, both at home and abroad.

This man was just the person to attract the attention of the young Rothsay. He could inform him of all the life and follies of foreign courts, and introduce him to the most criminal pleasures of his own capital. Rothsay, with his openness of character, did not for a moment conceal his hatred of Albany, and Ramorgny with the utmost coolness advised him to have him assassinated. From this diabolical counsel Rothsay, who, however misguided, was honourable by nature, revolted in horror, and heaped such terms of abhorrence on his adviser, that Ramorgny, stung with all the resentment of a fiend, and incapable of the remorse of a man, conceived the most deadly hatred to the young duke, betrayed his conversations to Albany, and lent himself to assist in his destruction.

In league with this villainous uncle and his villainous confident Ramorgny were now, unfortunately, the earl of Douglas, whose sister Rothsay had married but neglected, and Sir William Lindsay of Rossy, whose sister he had loved and

RESTORATION OF ISABELLA TO HER FATHER. (See page 491.)

forsaken. These noblemen now united in a plot which at this time of day appears not more revolting than astonishing,—the murder of the heir apparent to the throne.

To effect this, it was represented by them to the aged king, who lived in close retirement, and knew nothing of what passed without but through the medium of Albany, that such were the excesses of the prince that it was absolutely necessary to put him under some closer restraint. Ramorgny and Lindsay, as the most apparently disinterested, were made to introduce this to the king, and with such effect that the afflicted old monarch gave an order under the royal signet to arrest the prince and place him in temporary confinement. The victim was now in their power. Ramorgny and Lindsay seized him as he was on his way to St. Andrews with only a few followers, and shut him up in the castle of St. Andrews. Having sent off to Albany the tidings of their success, they were instructed by him to convey him to the solitary castle of Falkland. One tempestuous day, therefore, they threw a cloak over his rich dress, mounted him on a sorry horse, and, in this disguise, attended by a strong body of soldiers, they hurried him to Falkland and thrust him into a dungeon.

For fifteen days the unhappy prince was kept there under the charge of two ruffians of the names of Wright and Selkirk, whose business it was to starve him to death. When groaning in the agonies of hunger, his voice became known to a poor woman, who contrived to steal to his grated window, which was level with the ground, and convey him food, by dropping small barley cakes through the bars, and nourishing him with her own milk, conveyed to him through a pipe.

But the protracted life of their victim roused the suspicion of the assassins; they watched, and drove away the kind woman, and Rothsay soon perished in such terrible agonies that it was found, after his death, that he had gnawed the flesh from his own shoulder. His body was buried privately in the monastery of Lindores, and it was proclaimed that he had died of dysentery. But the fatal truth was not long in becoming public, and the public, forgetting the follies of the prince, now joined in universal execration against Albany as his murderer. Yet what availed it? The monarch, who bitterly bewailed the death of his son, and is supposed to have been well aware of his murderers, was himself in Albany's hands, and that daring and unscrupulous man not only demanded examination before parliament of his conduct, but obtained for himself and Douglas an acquittal from all charge of guilt, which none dared to advance against them, and still more, an attestation from the powerless king, under his own seal, of their innocence, which, however, nobody believed.

While these horrors had been maturing and transacting, the earl of March, resenting the treatment of himself and his daughter by the court and Douglas, had retreated to his impregnable castle of Dunbar, renounced his allegiance to the king of Scotland, done homage to Henry of England, and joined energetically the Percies of Nothumberland in their attacks on his native country. What stimulated him to more bitterness was to see his vast estates conferred on Douglas, the hereditary enemy of his house. He made frequent inroads, either to recover his lands, or, by laying them waste, to render them useless to the intruder. These devastating visits obliged the border barons, the Haliburtons, the Cockburns, Hepburns, and Lauders, to make common cause with the Douglas. They agreed to give the command by turns to the different chiefs, and each was ambitious to excel his associates by some feat of arms, called in the language of the times *chevanche*. On one of these occasions, the command being in the hands of Sir Patrick Hepburn of Hailes, the Scots broke into England and laid waste the country with great fury; but going too far, they were intercepted by Percy and March on Nesbit Moor in the Merse. The Scots were only four hundred in number, but they were well armed and mounted, and consisted of the flower of the Lothians. The battle was long doubtful, but March, who had not arrived before, coming up with two hundred men from the garrison at Berwick, decided the fortune of the day. Hepburn himself was killed, and such was the destruction of his best knights and his followers that the spot still retains the name of Slaughter Hill.

Henry was delighted with the news of this victory. He complimented the Percies and March on their prompt bravery, and commanded them to call out and assemble the feudal levies of the northern counties, as the Scots were menacing the borders on the west, and ravaging the neighbourhood of Carlisle. Henry's information was correct. To revenge the defeat of Nesbit Moor, lord Archibald Douglas took the field with ten thousand picked men, and Albany, who now wielded unlimited power in Scotland, sent his son Murdoch to join him with a strong body of archers and spearmen. The most distinguished knights and barons of Scotland followed the Douglas banner. There were the earls of Moray and Fife, Fergus Macdowall with his wild Galwegians, the chiefs of the houses of Erskine, Grahame, Montgomery, Seton, Sinclair and Lesley, the Stewarts of Angus, Lorn, and Durisdeer, with many other gentlemen. A nobler army, for its numbers, never left Scotland under a Douglas. But the present earl of Douglas was as noted for his lack of caution, and for his numerous consequent defeats, as his ancestors had been for their care and success, so that he had acquired the by-name of "the Tyne-man," the losing man. He rushed on across the Tweed with his accustomed impetuosity, and never stayed his course till he arrived before the gates of Newcastle. Everywhere the country people, unsupported by any armed force, had fled before him, and he and his followers now found themselves so loaded with booty that it was necessary to return.

Secure in their numbers and in the flight of the inhabitants, the Scots pursued their homeward way leisurely, till they arrived near Milfield, not far from Wooler, in Northumberland. But here they found themselves confronted by a strong force under the earl of Northumberland, his son Hotspur, and the earl of March. Douglas seized on an excellent position, a hill called Homildon, had he only had cavalry and men-at-arms to contend with; but the forces of the Percies consisted chiefly of archers, and there were many eminences round Homildon which completely commanded it, and whence the English bowmen could shoot down the Scots at pleasure.

The English occupied a strong pass; but perceiving their advantage, and that the Scots had not even taken possession of the eminence opposed to them, they advanced and secured that important ground. Had the Scots taken care to preoccupy that, they could have charged down on the

English archers if they ventured to leave the pass, and the battle must speedily have been brought to a hand fight, where the Scots, from their vantage ground, could have committed great havoc.

The English, having posted themselves to their own surprise on the eminence opposite to the Scots, saw that Douglas had crowded his whole force into one dense column exposing them to the enemy, and impeding by their closeness their own action. Hotspur, at the head of the men-at-arms, proposed to charge the Scots, but March instantly seized his bridle rein, and showed him that he would by his advance lose the grand advantage offered them by the oversight of Douglas. He made him aware that the bowmen could speedily level the serried ranks of the Scots without any danger to themselves. The truth of this was at once perceived; the English archers advanced, pouring their arrows in showers upon the Scots, who were so thickly wedged together, and so scantily furnished with armour having little more on them than a steel cap and a slender jack or breast plate, or a quilted coat, that the cloth-yard arrows of the English made deadly work amongst them. As the English continued to advance, the best armour of the knights was found incapable of resisting their arrows, while the Scottish archers drew feebler and more uncertain bows, and produced little effect. The confusion among the forces of Douglas became terrible; the bravest knights and barons fell mortally wounded; the horses struck with the arrows reared and plunged, and trod down the riders of their own party. The Galwegians, only half clad, presented, according to the accounts of the time, the appearance of huge hedgehogs, so thickly were they bristled over with the shafts of the enemy.

In this mortal dilemma a brave knight, Sir John Swinton, exclaimed, "My friends, why stand we here to be marked down by the enemy, and that like deer in a park? Where is our ancient valour? Shall we stand still, and have our hands nailed to our lances? Follow me, in the name of God; let us break yonder ranks, or die like men!"

On hearing this, Sir Adam Gordon, who had long been at deadly feud with Swinton, threw himself from his horse, entreated his forgiveness, and kneeling, begged the honour of being knighted by his hand. Swinton instantly complied, and the two knights tenderly embracing each other, mounted and charged down on the enemy, followed by a hundred horsemen. Had the whole body of the Scots followed, they might have retrieved the day; but such was the confusion in the Scottish lines, that before Douglas could advance to support them, Swinton and Gordon were slain, and their little band slaughtered or dispersed. When at length Douglas was able to move on, the English archers, keeping perfect order, fell back upon their cavalry but poured, Parthian-like, showers of arrows behind them on the Scots. The carnage was awful. No defence could withstand the English arrows; and the earl of Douglas himself, who wore on this fatal day a suit of armour of the most tried temper and exquisite workmanship, which had required three years to manufacture, was wounded in five places, and taken prisoner, together with Murdoch Stewart, the son of the governor, Albany, eighty knights, the earls of Moray and Angus, and a crowd of esquires and pages, some of them French. The Scottish army was utterly routed; fifteen hundred men are said to have perished in attempting to escape across the Tweed; and amongst the numerous slain, besides the chivalric knights Swinton and Gordon, were Sir John Levingston of Calendar, Sir Alexander Ramsay of Dalhousie, Sir Roger Gordon, Sir Walter Scott, and Sir William Sinclair.

The Field of the Battle of Shrewsbury.

Such was the bloody battle of Homildon Hill another of

those great victories which the English owed entirely to the matchless superiority of their bows and bowmen; for Walsingham declares that neither earl, knight, nor squire handled their weapons, or came into action; though, when the Scots were broken, they joined in the pursuit. It was a most decisive battle, effacing, on the part of Hotspur, the memory of Otterburn, and affording to March a signal vengeance upon Douglas, who was defeated, desperately wounded with the loss of an eye, and taken prisoner.

When Henry received the news of this great victory, achieved on the day of the exaltation of the holy cross, September 14th, 1402, he instantly despatched a messenger with letters of congratulation to the Percies and the earl of March, but commanded them not on any account to admit to ransom any of their prisoners, of any rank whatever, or to suffer them to be upon parole until they received further instructions. The object of this order was plainly to keep Scotland quiet by retaining so many of her bravest leaders in his power; but the preremptory tone of the command, coming in the hour of victory, gave great offence to the commanders. It was a settled and ancient right of the conqueror to ransom his prisoners, and it came with a more sensible effect on the fiery spirit of Hotspur from the recent refusal of Henry to permit him to ransom his brother-in-low, the earl of Marche, from Owen Glendower. Henry took care to assure the victors that it was not his intention to deprive ultimately any of his liege subjects of their undoubted rights in regard to their captives; but Henry was not famous for keeping his word in opposition to his interests, as had been shown to all the world in the case of the queen Isabella. The reader will recollect the indignant language put by Shakespeare into the mouth of Hotspur on this occasion, and, notwithstanding the assertion of recent writers that the offence really taken by the Percies was not from this cause, we see no reason to doubt the relations of Rymer and other authorities. This second interference of Henry was the deciding cause of that immediately following revolt of the Percies, to which they were already no little disposed.

They had been the means of placing Henry on the throne, as it would seem, without intending it, for he had sworn to them on the gospels at Doncaster that he aimed at nothing more than asserting his own invaded rights. Henry had rewarded them with large grants of land, including those of their prisoner Douglas, which lay in Eskdale, Liddesdale, with Ettrick Forest, and the lordship of Selkirk. The Percies, indeed, might regard these last as scarcely more than nominal gifts, for they would require a powerful force to keep possession of them, and they were almost immediately retaken by the Scots. The Percies, in fact, were ill pleased with the haughty tone of Henry, who owed them so much, and they were now in close alliance with the Mortimers, who had the real claim to the throne. That Henry received their desire to liberate their royal relative with fear and suspicion was clear from the fact that he made no resistance to the ransom of lord Grey de Ruthyn. Henry did not hesitate to say in reply to Hotspur's pertinacious demands of Marche's liberty, that he and his uncle Mortimer had gone to Glendower of their own accord, and that no loyal subject would, therefore, wish them back again.

This was pointed language to a mind like Hotspur's. But there were still other causes at work. The earl of Northumberland attended at Westminster with his prisoner Murdoch Stewart, the son of Albany, and six other captives. They were presented to Henry, who, though he invited them to dine with him, received them rather coldly, and used severe language to Sir Adam Forster, one of them. The earl pressed Henry for the payment of large sums of money due to him for the custody of the Marches and the costs of the Scottish war. This of all subjects was the most distasteful to Henry, who was always short of money, and reluctant to part with it when he had it. To balance this account—as he had done that of the dowry of queen Isabella, by a credit on the unpaid ransom of king John—he now gave Northumberland, instead of hard cash, the lands of Douglas, which would require for their defence still more hard blows. Northumberland returned home in no good humour, and the work of revolt now went rapidly on.

The earl of Westmoreland, the brother of earl Percy, entered into their quarrel regarding the liberation of the Mortimers. Scrope, the archbishop of York, the brother of William Scrope, earl of Wiltshire, who had been put to death by Henry at Bristol, and who, therefore, hated Henry, advised these nobles to depose the usurper, and place the earl of Marche, the rightful prince, on the throne. The first open evidence of the insurrection was furnished by Edmund Mortimer, who, to free himself from captivity, gave his daughter in marriage to Owen Glendower, and on his part agreed to join the confederacy for the overthrow of Henry of Lancaster, with twelve thousand men.

Meantime, the Percies and the earl of March had agreed to liberate Douglas, their prisoner, on condition that he should join the enterprise with a certain number of Scottish knights. Accordingly the Percies and March made a foray into Teviotdale, and challenged the chivalry of Scotland, by way of concealing their real enterprise from the eyes of the English king, to meet them in battle on the 1st of August. Keeping up the appearance of an attack on Scotland, they invested an insignificant fortress on the borders called the Tower of Cocklaws, commanded by a simple esquire, one John Greenlaw. This petty border hold was besieged with all the forms of war by this powerful army. It was assaulted by the archers, and battered by the trebuchets and mangonels, but still it stood firm, and its commander at length entered into a treaty with Hotspur, promising to surrender it in six weeks, that is, on the aforesaid 1st of August, if not sooner relieved by the king of Scotland, or Albany, the governor. This made it necessary to send a courier to Edinburgh, ostensibly to communicate this agreement to the government, but really under cover of it to open a negotiation with Albany for his adhesion to the enterprise. The utmost publicity was given by the Percies to the expected rencontre between the nations on the 1st of August. They applied in all directions for aid and troops from their friends, and carried the deception so far as to even solicit Henry for arrears of money due to them, amounting to twenty thousand pounds, in order to enable them to maintain the honour of the nation.

Henry must have lost much of his usual sagacity if he had not for some time seen through this solemn farce. The black clouds of the coming tempest had been drawing together from various quarters for some time, and dull must have been the vision of the government had they not

attracted their notice. Henry sent no money, but ominously avowed his intention of joining his faithful Percies in person, and sharing their dangers for their common country. This appears to have startled the covert insurgents. They at once altered the tone of their pretensions. They abruptly abandoned the anticipated glories of their Scottish campaign, and directing their course towards Wales, gave out that they were about to make war on Owen Glendower, in defence of king Henry.

Henry of Lancaster was by no means deceived. He knew that Mortimer had allied himself to Glendower, and publicly proclaimed his intention to maintain the cause of his nephew, the earl of Marche, against Henry. Still more, the Scottish earl of March, refusing to participate in the treasonable designs of the Percies, from his mortal hatred to Douglas, whom they had made an associate, hastened to Henry, and fully apprised him of the real situation of affairs. Henry, therefore, lost no time in marching northward; but this movement quickened that of Hotspur.

It has been said, that if this conspiracy had been executed with as much prudence as it was planned, it would have cost Henry his crown; and the cause of failure has been laid on the precipitancy of Hotspur and the timidity of his father. But it must be borne in mind that Henry was a suspicious and vigilant monarch, constantly in danger, and, therefore, constantly on the alert to detect it. Fortune, Providence, or his singular circumspection, served him uniformly in all these conspiracies, and enabled him to defeat all his adversaries. It must also be borne in mind that to arrange a sufficient military force to overturn the throne of a monarch like Henry, it required extended ramifications of conspiracy; and this involved the imminent danger of bringing into the field of operation some individuals hostile or traitorous to the enterprise. On this occasion the Percies had announced their object to the governments of France and Scotland, and the defiances arriving from the duke of Orleans and the count of St. Pol seem to have originated from this cause. But if they did not awake suspicion in the breast of Henry, there was the the Scottish earl of March, as there had been the traitorous earl of Rutland before, to prove a stumbling-block to the conspirators. It was almost impossible to avoid making him a confidant, and if made, he was pretty sure to damage them through his hatred to Douglas.

At the critical moment when Henry had clearly obtained intelligence of what was going forward, Albany, who was raising all Scotland, and proposing to bring down fifty thousand men to join them, had not had time to complete his muster. The old earl of Northumberland fell ill, or, as some historians will have it, grew afraid, and could not march. It was, therefore, no precipitance, but an inexorable necessity which compelled Hotspur to use all diligence to effect a junction with Owen Glendower, before overtaken by Henry. He was accompanied by Douglas and his Scottish knights; and by his uncle the earl of Worcester, the lieutenant of South Wales, with what forces he could get together. The men of Chester, always devoted to king Richard, came out and joined them on the march to support his cause, for they heard that he was still alive. The whole insurgent army amounted to fourteen thousand men, and even though disappointed of the contingents of the Scottish regent and the old earl of Northumberland, if they could reach the army of Glendower they would present a most formidable force.

But in this Henry was too quick for them. He himself, knowing the valour of both the troops and the leaders who came against him, was desirous to delay awhile an actual conflict with them; but the Scottish earl of March, who seems to have been an admirable tactician, as he had seen the true mode of action at Homildon, saw it in this case, and urged vehemently on Henry the necessity of checking the Percies before they could form a junction with Glendower. Henry saw the wisdom of the advice: he had now reached Burton-upon-Trent, and turning west, he pushed forward by forced marches, and entered Shrewsbury at the same moment that the advanced guard of Percy and Douglas was seen in all haste endeavouring to gain that city.

Hotspur and Douglas, failing in their intent to secure entrance into the town, drew off their forces to Hartley-field, within a short distance of the city, where they pitched their camp. From this camp the confederates sent to the king a defiance, which has been preserved by Hardyng, who was in the service of Hotspur, and the next day accompanied him to the battle. In this they accused Henry of being false and perjured, inasmuch as he had sworn at Doncaster on the holy gospels that he would claim nothing but the property of himself and his wife; yet he had deposed, imprisoned, and murdered Richard the king. That he had not only destroyed Richard, but usurped the right of the earl of Marche, and had violated the laws and constitution in various ways; for which reason they pronounced him a perjured traitor, and were determined to assert the cause of the rightful heir. Henry replied that he had no time to waste in writing; but the next morning, the 21st of July, the vigil of St. Mary Magdalene, drew his forces out of the city, and put them in order of battle. When this was accomplished he appeared struck with some doubts of the result of the battle, for the forces were equal in number, and the opponents tried and strong warriors. He therefore sent the abbot of Shrewsbury to the hostile camp with offers of peace, which, after long deliberation, were rejected by the advice of the earl of Worcester, who bade them not hope to escape the vengeance of Henry if they consented to put themselves again into his power.

On receiving this answer Henry cried, "Then, banners, advance!" and the cries of "St. George!" and "Esperance, Percy!" rent the air. It was a pitiful sight to see so fine an army of Englishmen drawn up against each other for mutual destruction; and at the very first discharge the archers on both sides made a fearful slaughter. Every passion and motive was called into action which could lead to a desperate conflict. Never were there two more equally balanced armies. Each was about fourteen thousand strong. Hardyng, who, as we have said, was present, states Hotspur's force at nine thousand knights, yeomen, and archers, "withouten raskaldry," that is, common hired soldiers. The leaders on both sides were the most valiant men and distinguished captains of the age, tried in many a hard-fought field. Their followers were the flower of the English and Scottish armies. Here were not the renowned English archers on one, but on both sides; and these supported by such a body of gentlemen and the substantial yeomanry of the country as had rarely been assembled in so moderately-sized a host. On the one side

the king and his son fought for crown, life, and reputation. If they were conquered there was nothing for them short of loss of the crown, of existence, and of reputation; for they must go down to posterity as usurpers who had deluged their country with blood for their criminal ambition. For Hotspur, on the other hand, it was either victory and the establishment of a close alliance with the old hereditary line, in the person of the new king of England, or execution, if taken; or, if he escaped, eternal banishment, and the ruin of his noble house and of all his kindred and adherents. Therefore every man, and pre-eminently the leaders, put forth all their force, and fought with the most lion-like desperation. raged everywhere. They broke through the English ranks with thirty picked followers, and wherever they saw a royally-dressed and mounted champion they attacked and slew him. Douglas, who is described as performing, as well as Hotspur, prodigies of valour, is said to have killed three of the sham kings with his own hand. When at length they approached the real king he exclaimed in astonishment, "Where the devil do all these kings come from?" The two brave generals attacked Henry himself with the same fury with which they had assaulted those who resembled him. They came so near to him that they slew Sir Walter Blount, the standard-bearer, threw down

The French Fleet reaching Milford Haven. (See page 503.)

According to Walsingham, the insurgents gave out that Richard himself was alive and with them in the field to assist in avenging his own injuries.

Percy and Douglas, who had so often fought in opposition, now rushed on side by side, like two young lions, beating and bearing down all before them. Everywhere they sought out the king, determined to take him, alive or dead. But again the cunning Scottish earl of March, who seemed to think of everything, had advised the king to take the field in the armour of a simple captain, and to dress up several captains in the royal garb. The ruse succeeded admirably for the king, but fatally for his representatives. Douglas and Hotspur the standard, killed the earl of Stafford and two other knights, and were within a few yards of Henry, when his good genius, the Scottish earl of March, rushed forward and entreated him, if he valued his life, to keep somewhat more aback.

The battle now raged here portentously, and knights and gentlemen fell promiscuously on all sides. For three hours the struggle and carnage went on, every one fighting, Scot against Scot, Englishman against Englishman, with the fury of demons. The archers all the while pouring in their showers of arrows on their opponents, so that Walsingham says, "the dead lay thick as leaves in autumn," and so en-

EXECUTION OF THE ARCHBISHOP OF YORK. (See page 502.)

cumbered the ranks, that there was scarcely any advancing over them. Still everywhere the forces of Percy and Douglas were carrying the day; yet, at length, Henry's fortune once more prevailed. He had fought everywhere with a gallantry not surpassed by any man in the field. When unhorsed he was rescued by the prince of Wales, who, though wounded early in the battle with an arrow in the face, fought through it all with the most distinguished bravery, giving full promise of his future martial fame. But Hotspur and Douglas, finding that the ranks of the royal army through which they had broken, had closed after them, endeavoured at length to cut their way back to their own troops. In this, however, they were not easily successful. The battle was in its full fury, every man fought like a hero, and they found themselves assailed on all sides by the points of spears, swords, and flights of arrows. In the heat of the *melée*, Hotspur, nearly suffocated in his armour from his prodigious exertions, for an instant raised his visor for air. That instant an arrow struck him in the face, passed through his brain, and he fell dead on the field.

At this sight, which was beheld by both armies, the royal ranks set up the jubilant shout of "St. George and victory." The Scots and Percy's forces gave way, and the flight and pursuing massacre became general. The Scots were almost entirely cut to pieces. Douglas in endeavouring to escape fell over a precipice; or, as others say, his horse stumbled in ascending a hill, he was thrown, severely injured, and taken.

The numbers of killed and wounded in this terrific action are said to have been five thousand on the side of the king, and a much greater number on that of the insurgents. Otterburn says that nearly two thousand three hundred gentlemen fell, and about six thousand private men, of whom two-thirds were of the insurgent army. The most distinguished persons who perished on the royal side were the earl of Stafford, Sir Walter Blount, Sir Hugh Shirley, Sir Nicholas Gausel, Sir Hugh Mortimer, Sir John Massey, and Sir John Calverley. Besides Hotspur and Sir Robert Stuart being killed, the uncle of Hotspur, the earl of Worcester, the baron of Kinderton, and Sir Richard Vernon were taken prisoners. Douglas was treated by Henry with the courtesy due to his rank and reputation, and as a foreign enemy, not as a rebel; but Worcester, Kinderton, and Vernon were immediately beheaded.

The rapidity with which Henry had broken in upon the plans of the insurgents, had prevented one of the most formidable coalitions imaginable. The duke of Albany in Scotland had assembled fifty thousand men, and advanced to join Hotspur at the tower of Cocklaws; but on arriving there he found Percy and his army gone thence; and soon after hearing that he was defeated and slain at Shrewsbury, he gave out that his expedition had only been intended to drive that nobleman from Scotland, and returned quietly to Edinburgh.

The earl of Northumberland, recovering from his illness, was far advanced in his march with a considerable body of men to join the main army, when he was met by the intelligence of the defeat and death of his son, and his brother, the earl of Worcester. Completely dejected by this calamitous news, he disbanded his little army, and retired to his castle of Warkworth. Owen Glendower, from some cause, never appeared.

No sooner was this destructive battle over than Henry marched northward to disperse any remains of disaffection or armed force. He acted with consummate policy, prohibiting his troops from plundering, and offering pardon to all concerned in the late rebellion who laid down their arms. The earl of Northumberland hastened to avail himself of this lenity, and presented himself before Henry at York; who received him, as might be expected, with evident displeasure and reproaches for the perfidy of his conduct. It is said that the old earl was mean enough to declare that he never intended any disloyalty, but was marching his troops to join the royal army—a circumstance which, if true, would induce us to believe all that writers of the time have insinuated of the dubious character of the indisposition which prevented him appearing at the moment of action. Henry seems to have received his miserable plea with deserved contempt, and he retained him in honourable custody for judgment by the approaching parliament. He then proceeded to issue orders for the arrest of the lady Elizabeth, the widow of Hotspur, and compelled the knights of Northumberland to swear fealty to him.

When parliament assembled, Northumberland presented his petition to the king, acknowledging his assembling his retainers, but pleading Henry's promise of pardon at York, on condition of his surrender. The king referred the decision of his case to the judges, but the lords claimed it as their right to try their brother peer; and many of them having been more or less involved in the recent league with him, they pronounced him not guilty of treason or felony, but only of trespasses, for which they adjudged him bound to pay a fine at the king's pleasure. He then swore fealty to Henry, to the prince of Wales, and to the other sons of the king and their issue, whereupon Henry granted him his pardon, and in a few months restored him to his lands and honours, with the exception of the Isle of Man, the governorship of Berwick, and some other fortresses.

Henry had thus quelled this dangerous rebellion with great spirit and address, but he was still surrounded by dangers; he still found himself pursued by all the evils and annoyances of a usurper. The French friends and families of the slain insurgents were full of animosity; the country complained of the weight of taxes imposed to put down these continual disturbances, the direct consequences of Henry's arbitrary seizure of the crown; and his enemies abroad were insulting the country, and plundering its coasts in revenge of his offences.

The French attacked Guienne, and plundered every English ship and every part of the English coasts that they could approach. They captured a whole fleet of merchantmen; they attacked and took Jersey and Guernsey; they made a descent on Plymouth, burnt it, and laid waste the whole neighbourhood. Walleran de St. Pol put his threat in force, of annoying and injuring Henry by every means in his power. He cruised along our coasts with a squadron of ships, landed on the Isle of Wight, and inflicted severe injuries on the inhabitants before he was repulsed. The admiral of Brittany scoured our coasts and the narrow seas, and carried off no less than fifty prizes, and nearly two thousand prisoners. No less than three princes of the House of Bourbon were engaged in thus discharging on the people of England their vengeance for the crimes of their king.

Henry granted letters of marque to make reprisals, and

the inhabitants of the English seaports associated and carried on a vigorous maritime warfare. They retaliated on the French, ravaged their coasts, burnt their towns, and often even penetrated into the interior. They brought several fleets, laden with wine and other valuable cargo, into the British ports. They burnt Pennareh and St. Mahé. The Flemings and Easterlings, instigated by the duke of Orleans and St. Pol, joined with the French in this piratical persecution of the English, and Henry sent out his second son, Thomas, afterwards duke of Clarence, with a fleet, who committed great havoc on their coasts, destroying ships, people, and towns, without mercy. Thus did the people, as is too commonly the case, suffer for the crimes and feuds of their rulers.

To relieve the pressure of his wants, he made an attempt, through the Commons, to resume the grants of the Crown, and to appropriate some of the property of the church; which resulted in nothing but exasperation of the minds of both laity and clergy. The widow of the lord Spenser, who had been executed at Bristol, formed a scheme to liberate from Henry's custody the young earl of Marche and his brother. She reached their apartments at Windsor by means of false keys, and succeeding in getting them safely out of the castle, was on her way with them towards Wales, where their uncle Mortimer was in close alliance with Glendower. But the vigilance of Henry was quickly aroused; the fugitives were pursued and captured. Lady Spenser, on being interrogated by the council, avowed that her brother, the duke of York, the notorious Rutland, who betrayed everybody, and who had now succeeded his father in his title and estates, was at the bottom of the scheme. York was immediately arrested; but he protested his entire innocence, and, after a few months' confinement in the castle of Pevensey, he was released and restored to the full enjoyment of his rank and property.

Meantime, Robert king of Scotland, crushed by the murder of his eldest son, the duke of Rothsay, and trembling for the fate of his second son, James, earl of Carrick, still a boy of only fourteen years of age, was too much enfeebled by age and adversity to be able to contend with the wicked Albany, or find any means of security for his son at home, where that nobleman held unlimited sway. He therefore agreed to place him in charge of the king of France, and the young prince, accompanied by the earl of Orkney, Fleming of Cumbernauld, the lords of Dirleton and Hermandston, and a strong body of the barons of the Lothians, proceeded to North Berwick, and embarked in a ship which awaited him at the Bass. The earl of Orkney and a small personal suite alone accompanied him on the voyage, and as the truce was still existing with England, they had no apprehensions from that quarter. But they were already watched by the sleepless eyes of Henry of Lancaster, and when they were off Flamborough Head, they were captured by an armed merchantman of Wye, and carried to London.

The earl of Orkney presented a letter to Henry, written by Robert of Scotland, entreating him, should his son be compelled by stress of weather to put into an English port, to show him kindness. The earl added, that the young prince was on his way to France for the purpose of his education, and prayed that they might be permitted to pursue their way in peace and security. But Henry had not planned their capture on trivial grounds, and was not, therefore, to be persuaded to give up his prize by mere words. His interest was his paramount principle, and with that he rarely suffered feelings of justice or a sense of honour to interfere. The seizure of the son of a neighbouring king, at entire peace with him, was as gross a breach of the laws of nations as could be conceived; but then Henry had by it obtained a pledge of good behaviour on the part of Scotland. He had now the heir-apparent in his hands, and could employ that advantage in counteraction of the use made by Scotland of the pretended king Richard. Henry, therefore, merely replied to the entreaties of the attendants of the Scottish prince, that he would be perfectly safe with him, and that as to his education, he spoke French as well as the king of France or the duke of Orleans, and that his father, in fact, could not have sent him to a better master. James and his suite were consigned to the safe keeping of the Tower. That nothing could be more agreeable to the duke of Albany than to have the heir to the throne safely secured at a distance, was apparent to all the world, as it would leave him, in case of the king's death, regent, and all but king in name. So much was this felt, that many did not hesitate to declare the whole affair to have been planned between Albany and Henry; and the feeble public remonstrances of Albany confirmed this belief. Douglas, on the other hand, who would fain have had the young prince in his hands as a means of gratifying his own lust of power, and as curbing that of Albany, was so enraged at the conveyance of the earl of Carrick out of the kingdom, that his son, James Douglas of Abercorn, attacked the party of nobles who had accompanied the prince, on their return from North Berwick, and at the moor of Lang-Hermandston slew Sir David Fleming, and took most of the other nobles prisoners. This disastrous termination of the scheme which Robert of Scotland had devised for the safety of his son, hastened his death, which took place in 1406, and Albany was appointed regent during the absence of the young prince, which he was not, therefore, likely to reduce by any very strenuous exertions of his own.

It might have been expected that Henry's decisive suppression of the Percy insurrection would have procured him some considerable interval of peace; but this was by no means the case. The Percies were on fire with resentment, and resolved to take revenge for their humiliation and the deaths of Hotspur and Worcester on the very first opportunity. The earl of Nottingham, son of the duke of Norfolk, and Scrope, the archbishop of York, who, though they had remained passive while Hotspur was in the field, now did their best to fan the flame of revolt in the heart of the old earl. He had been compelled at the time of his pardon to sign an obligation to surrender into the hands of the king the castles of Berwick and Jedburgh, and was deprived of the offices of constable and warden of the marches.

Henry had called two great councils of barons and prelates at St. Alban's, but found in them a spirit very uncompliant with his demands. Foremost in opposition and in denouncing the measures of the king was the lord Bardolf. He soon found it safest to absent himself from court, and he therefore hastened north to the earl of Northumberland, and added his overflowing discontent to that which was already effervescing in the bosoms of the earl and of his partisans. The insurgents took the field, but, as in all their attempts during this reign, without any concert. First appeared in arms Sir John Falconberg

and three other knights in Cleveland, in May of 1405. They were immediately assaulted and dispersed by prince John, the third son of king Henry, and the earl of Westmoreland. Then the archbishop of York and the earl of Nottingham, more commonly called the earl Mowbray, who also was earl marshal, with unexampled rashness appeared in arms without waiting for the forces of the duke of Northumberland. They fixed on the doors of the churches in York and other places a defiance of the king, charging him with the same crimes and misdemeanors which were contained in the proclamation at Shrewsbury,—perjury, usurpation, murder, extortion, and the like. They assembled eight thousand men at Skipton-on-the-Moor. The prince and earl of Westmoreland having defeated Falconberg's force, marched against them, and came up with them in the forest of Galtres on the 29th of May.

Finding that the forces of the insurgents exceeded their own, the earl of Westmoreland proposed a friendly conference which was acceded to. There the earl acted with an art not more remarkable than the simplicity of those on whom it was practised. The archbishop presented a list of grievances, which Westmoreland read and declared to be perfectly reasonable, and presenting, in his opinion, no difficulties but such as might readily be got over. The matters in dispute were discussed. Westmoreland approved of all that they suggested, conceded all their demands, and solemnly swore to procure the royal ratification of every condition.

Having thus amicably terminated their differences, the earl called for wine, which the negotiators partook of in sight of both armies. Westmoreland then proposed that they should embrace, in sign of amity, which also took place in view of the two armies. While they were thus drinking and embracing the earl pleasantly suggested that as they were now friends, there could be no necessity for keeping their armies assembled, and proposed that they should disband them all on the spot, let them know that peace was concluded, and allow every man to go home.

To this the earl Mowbray made some objection, but the archbishop, who was sincerity and simplicity embodied, overruled his caution, and gave orders for the dismissal of their troops. No sooner was this done, and the army of the insurgents dispersing on all sides in confusion, than it was seen that the soldiers of the Crown remained stationary, having been duly instructed beforehand; and Westmoreland, throwing off the mask, arrested the archbishop, the earl marshal, and the other leaders who had come to the conference. This news reaching the insurgents, every one made the best of his way in flight for his own safety.

Henry was already on his way to support his son and Westmoreland. He had already arrived at Pontefract, and at that spot, so suggestive of his unrelenting disposition, the insurgent leaders, thus perfidiously entrapped, were brought before him. He ordered them to follow him to Bishopsthorpe, the palace of the primate, near York; as if, with a refinement of cruelty, he would make the fate which he designed him the more bitter by inflicting it on the spot of his past greatness and authority. There he commanded the chief justice, Gascoigne, to pronounce on them sentence of death, but that upright and inflexible judge refused, declaring that he had no jurisdiction over either archbishop or earl, who must be tried by their peers. Sir William Fulthorpe was appointed on the spot chief justice of the King's Bench for the occasion; and this pliant tool, no doubt selected with full knowledge of his obsequious nature, called them at once before him, and, without any form of law, indictment, trial, or jury, condemned them to be beheaded as traitors; and the sentence was carried instantly into execution, with many circumstances of wanton and unworthy cruelty.

Judge Gascoigne.

This was the first time that a prelate had suffered capital punishment in England. Prelates had been imprisoned and punished by forfeiture and banishment, but no king had yet dared to put to death a bishop; and the circumstance did not pass without the pope launching the thunders of excommunication against all persons concerned in this ominous innovation, though without especially naming the king. The archbishop, on hearing his sentence, protested that he never intended any evil to the person of Henry, and merely sought redress of grievances; but, after having twice incited the insurgents to arms, and being believed to have written the last proclamation, if not that also at Shrewsbury, he was not likely to obtain credence. When afterwards the king called upon the House of Lords to record a judgment of high treason against the archbishop and the earl marshal, they demurred, and required the question to lie over till the next parliament—a significant hint of their disapproval, which Henry was wise enough to take. The matter was never mentioned again.

Henry punished the city of York for its disposition to support the views of the archbishop, by depriving it of its franchises, and then, at the head of thirty-seven thousand men, marched in pursuit of the earl of Northumberland and lord Bardolf. Northumberland had delayed his demonstration this time to secure the assistance of Albany, the regent of Scotland, and aid from France. He had readily formed an alliance with Albany, but failed in procuring any support from the French court. As Henry advanced north, Northumberland retired. Henry took successive possession of the duke's castles of Prudhoe, Warkworth, and Alnwick; and as he drew near Berwick, Northumberland, who never showed much courage, surrendered it into the

hands of the Scots, and fell back still further on his Scottish allies. The Scots themselves, not thinking the town tenable against Henry's forces, set it on fire and deserted it. The castle alone appeared disposed to make resistance; but the shot of an enormous cannon having shattered one of the towers, it opened its gates, and the son of the baron of Graystock, with the six principal officers, were immediately executed. Henry turned southward victorious, and at Pontefract—which no thoughts of the murder he was charged with committing prevented his visiting—he conferred upon his queen the several great estates of the earl of Northumberland and lord Bardolf.

Henry now marched to Wales, whither he had sent his son prince Henry, in the spring. That gallant young prince, who had acquired such renown on the field of Shrewsbury, had pursued Glendower into his fortresses, with all the ardour and impetuosity of youth. For some time that artful general eluded his attacks, and set him at defiance by a variety of stratagems, but in the month of March he had obtained a signal victory over the Welsh at Grosmont, in Monmouthshire, and taken Griffin, the son of Glendower, who commanded, prisoner. He next laid siege to Lampeter castle in Cardiganshire, and after a long siege reduced it. But now the French appeared upon the scene with a force of twelve thousand men, if we are to credit Otterburn.

Glendower, finding his power gradually undermined by the efforts of Henry and his valiant son, had applied to the French, or, as some writers assert, had gone in person to solicit the aid of France. That country at the time was in a deplorable state of misgovernment. The malady of Charles VI. had reduced him to a condition of absolute imbecility. The powerful duke of Burgundy was dead, and the dissolute Orleans, living in open adultery with the queen, had usurped the whole powers of the state. As Albany was in Scotland, so was Orleans in France. Hating Henry with an inveterate hatred, he readily promised Glendower his assistance. A fleet was fitted out and entrusted to the count of La Marche, a gay young prince of the royal family, but engrossed in pleasures and gaieties. It was so late in the year when this courtly admiral reached his fleet at Brest, that his most sensible followers refused to venture to sea, and with a fragment of his force La Marche made an abortive descent on the English coast at Falmouth.

In the spring of 1405, however, a fresh fleet assembled by the resolute Orleans reached Wales, and debarked at Milford Haven. The fleet consisted of one hundred and twenty ships, and had taken on board a great number of cavalry horses, which, however, had nearly all perished during the stormy passage; and no sooner was the fleet moored than the squadron of the Cinque Ports sailed in after it, and burnt fifteen ships. It, moreover, cut off all supplies by sea, and soon after succeeded in capturing a portion of the French transports bringing ammunition and provisions.

The French army was commanded by the count Montmorency, marshal of Rieux, and the sire de Hugueville, grand master of the arbalisters. They marched to Haverfordwest, and burnt the town, but suffered great loss in attempting to take the castle, and were repulsed. They next advanced to Caermarthen, laying the country waste as they went; they took Caermarthen, and there were joined by Owen Glendower with a force of ten thousand men. This united force took its way towards England, and prince Henry, being in possession of an inferior force was compelled to avoid an engagement.

It was this which had made Henry hasten his march from the north. Before setting out, he granted the Isle of Man, forfeited by the earl of Northumberland, to Sir William Stanley, in whose family it continued till the reign of Elizabeth. On reaching Hereford the king was compelled to issue a proclamation representing that the kingdom was in great danger from the junction of the French and the Welsh; that his finances were totally exhausted; and that the tenths and fifteenths granted by parliament could not be levied till Martinmas. He, therefore, commanded the sheriffs of all the neighbouring counties to summon before them the richest men of their several shires, and prevail upon them to advance money on the credit of the taxes already voted.

To such extremity was Henry IV. reduced, in one of the most critical epochs of his troubled reign, and this total want of means for paying and feeding his army delayed him so long, that it was not till late in the year that he came face to face with the invaders. They had now reached the very gates of Worcester, and menaced that town. Henry having united his forces with those of his son, now advanced upon the enemy, who were posted on a considerable hill, and took up his position on an opposite height. For eight days, the two armies lay with a deep valley between them, neither of them willing to risk the loss of its vantage ground, and give battle under the unequal circumstances. There were occasional skirmishes, and three of the French lords were slain, including the brother of the marshal.

At length the Welsh and French beat a retreat into Wales, and Henry pursued them, but having reached their marshes and mountains, they turned upon the king's forces when they had, in their ardour, advanced incautiously amongst them, and inflicted great loss upon them, taking or destroying fifty of his wagons, containing the most valuable portion of his baggage. It was now the middle of October; the season was such as all the world then believed to be at the command of Glendower, tempestuous and incessantly raining. The roads became impassable, provisions were unattainable, and the king was heartily glad to draw off his army. Nor were the French less delighted to quit the country of the great necromancer, where they reaped more labours than laurels; and soon after they embarked and sailed back to France.

Freed for a moment from his anxiety, by the retreat of the Welsh and their allies, Henry turned his attention to the earl of Northumberland and lord Bardolf, who were still in Scotland. Knowing the secret disposition of Albany to encourage seditious enterprises against England, which was only kept in check by Henry holding the young king James in his hands, ready at any favourable moment to put him forward against him, he was by no means easy at the abode of those noblemen in that country.

For more than two years those noblemen had maintained their liberty in exile, wandering from place to place, to avoid the incessant arts and efforts of Henry to obtain possession of their persons. Sometimes they were soliciting aid from the Scots, sometimes from the Welsh, to renew their attempt to overturn the usurper. Henry was always on the watch to seize some advantage over them, and they were equally vigilant to inflict some injury on his troops or

government. They did not neglect an endeavour to obtain an interview with the pretended Richard in Stirling castle, and Albany would have been a bad tactician if he had openly refused them this. Nothing can be more obvious than that, if the Scottish government really were in possession of the person of Richard, they would have taken care to show him to the numbers of English exiles always at that court, that they might be perfectly satisfied of the fact. No such means of placing this question on an unquestionable basis ever appears to have been used, though both French and English had taken pains to satisfy themselves on this head.

The French, when it was first rumoured that Richard had escaped, received the news with general delight. They formed plans for his restoration; they were ready to make a descent on England with a large army to support his cause; and the bravest knights vowed to peril their lives and fortunes in defence of the rights of Richard and Isabella.

But they were puzzled by the very natural circumstance that Richard, if alive and at liberty in Scotland, sent no message to his wife, or her father and friends. Why was this? Why did he seek no means to regain his throne? Why did he hold no communication with his faithful adherents? Why not give his friends the satisfaction and the strength of an unmistakable assurance of his existence? To decide this question they resolved to send over a trustworthy agent. Creton, the former page of Richard, who had accompanied him to Ireland, and was taken prisoner with him in Wales, had recently written a poem on the wrongs and sufferings of his master. The French court selected Creton as their emissary to Scotland to penetrate the heart of this mystery. He went, and the result was that the Scottish Richard was declared to be an impostor, and that there remained no doubt but that Richard himself had been murdered. The French ordinance for the payment of Creton remains, and may be seen in the Archæologia. It is without date, but is supposed to have been issued in the year 1402; and the outburst of the indignation of the French court against Henry in 1403, the defiances of the duke of Orleans and Walleran de St. Pol, in which they charge Henry boldly with the murder of his king, seem a very natural consequence.

In 1404, Serlo, or Serle, a gentleman of king Richard's bed-chamber, propagated the report that Richard was still alive, and that he had been with him in Scotland. He brought letters and messages addressed by Richard under his privy seal to his friends in England. Maud, the old countess of Oxford, now far advanced in life, but having lost none of the remembrance of Henry's part in the destruction of her husband, eagerly imbibed all Serle's accounts, and "caused it to be reported," says Walsingham "throughout Essex, by her domestics, that king Richard was alive, and would soon come back, and recover and assert his former rank. She caused little stags of silver and gold to be fabricated, presents which the king was wont to confer upon his most favourite knights and friends, so that, by distributing these in place of the king, she might the more easily entice the most powerful men in that district to accede to her wishes."

The old countess by these means brought over many gentlemen to her belief, and amongst them several abbots of that county. The consequence was, as we have related, that these abbots, with Sir Roger Clarendon and others, were seized by king Henry, and summarily put to death for propagating this assurance of Richard being in Scotland. Henry eventually laid hold of Serle himself, who confessed that he had indeed seen a person in Scotland who was asserted to be king Richard, but who really was not so, but merely one Thomas Warde, who had been king Richard's court fool. Serle—who was said to have been concerned in the murder of the duke of Gloucester at Calais—was, of course, executed in London, after having been drawn on a sledge through every town between Pontefract and the capital; and the old countess of Oxford was shut up in prison.

And now the earl of Northumberland and lord Bardolf sought to satisfy themselves of the real facts,—whether this was a true or a spurious Richard,—for he was still supported by Albany as the real Simon Pure; whether Henry, in the proclamation made on the conviction of Serle, had forged his confession for him, as many asserted, and that the story of Thomas Warde was one of his invention. And what was the result? Northumberland, Bardolf, and their friends were assured that they were quite welcome to see and converse with Richard. Here the great mystery at last appeared on the point of being solved for ever. But no: they were met by the information that Richard refused to see them, and that no solicitations, not even those of Albany himself, could extort his consent. This must have quite satisfied these noblemen that Albany's Richard was really a *mamuet*, or puppet, as Henry styled him in his proclamations, and that nobody knew it so well as Albany himself.

Northumberland and Bardolf were soon compelled by the manœuvres of Henry to escape from Scotland. The Scottish noblemen who had been kept prisoners in England ever since the battles of Homildon Hill and Shrewsbury, were offered by Henry their liberty if they would persuade their friends in Scotland to seize and deliver up those noblemen. This disgraceful scheme was readily adopted by the Scotch prisoners and their friends, and would have been carried speedily into execution, but the news of it reached the ears of the brave Sir David Fleming, a staunch friend of the Percies. It must be remembered that not only was the earl of Douglas, but Murdoch, the son of the regent Albany, still amongst the prisoners of war in England; and, therefore, both Albany and the friends of Douglas, combining the most powerful party in Scotland, were engaged in this most dishonourable conspiracy for the betrayal of Northumberland, his young grandson, Henry lord Percy, and lord Bardolf. Sir David Fleming, disdaining to connive at so base a treason against the honour and hospitality of Scotland, gave the English noblemen timely warning. They escaped; but Sir David, as we have related, returning from conducting prince James to North Berwick on his way to France, was set upon by the son of Douglas and the connections of the other prisoners in England, and lost his life for his noble conduct. Northumberland and Bardolf made their escape to Glendower, in Wales.

The situation of Henry at this epoch was far from enviable. His usurpation had involved himself and the nation in constant feuds, battles, treasons, and bloodshed. The best and ablest men, instead of being able to unite their counsels and their efforts for the common good of the country, were inflamed by violent antipathies against each

RECONCILIATION OF THE DUKES OF BURGUNDY AND ORLEANS IN THE CHURCH OF THE AUGUSTINES. (See page 508.)

other. The lives of many of the noblest were sacrificed, and the resources of the country consumed in mutual destruction. Henry, indeed, by his skill, address, and courage, had defeated all the schemes formed for his dethronement, and dispersed his assailants, but he was still surrounded by malcontents and general dissatisfaction. All his efforts had not been able to extinguish the reports of the existence of King Richard. As often as these reports were exposed and made ridiculous, as certainly did they revive and renew their strength. The remonstrances of parliament were severe to an extraordinary degree against his exactions and mal-administration. According to the parliamentary history, the speaker of the House of Commons, Sir John Tibetot, in a speech addressed to the king, declared that the country was impoverished by excessive impositions, and that nothing was done for its benefit. That in Guienne ninety-six towns and castles were lost, though it had cost this nation great expenditure to defend it; and that the whole of our continental possessions were in danger. That the marches on the Scottish borders were in the worst condition; that the rebellion in Wales, notwithstanding every effort, was still unsuppressed. That Ireland was nearly lost, though the charges for its government continued. That at sea our trade was destroyed, and the vessels of our merchants intercepted. That the expenses of the royal household were excessive, and the court filled with "a set of worthless rascals."

Henry had left his son to continue the campaign in Wales, and he himself endeavoured to manage the domestic concerns of the kingdom; but, in addition to the calamities of war, and the difficulties just enumerated, which were chiefly the consequence of them, there now appeared the plague, which ravaged both town and country for several years. In London alone it carried off no less than thirty thousand people; and in other places it extirpated whole families, and left whole houses and almost villages empty.

To escape its violence, the court removed from London to Leeds Castle, in Kent. Desiring to be still farther from the capital, the king took shipping at Queenborough, on the Isle of Sheppey, and accompanied by a small squadron, commanded by Thomas Lord Camois, descended the Thames. Near its mouth the royal fleet was attacked by French pirates, and was in the greatest jeopardy. Four of his vessels, containing much valuable furniture, plate, and wearing apparel, and several persons of distinction, were taken, including Sir Thomas Rampstone, the vice-chamberlain, and Henry only escaped by the swiftness of his ship. This was a very admonitory proof of the truth of the representations of the House of Commons as to the condition of our naval affairs. Some suspicion was cast on lord Camois, the commander, and he was arraigned on a charge of treason or cowardice before the peers, but was honourably acquitted.

Encouraged by Henry's domestic difficulties, and the strong opposition manifested by parliament, the earl of Northumberland and lord Bardolf, having vainly waited for any decisive support from Owen Glendower, who indeed was now gradually sinking beneath the vigorous efforts of prince Henry, determined to make one more descent on England. Northumberland had tried in vain to induce Albany to embrace his cause. He had then gone over to France, and thence to Flanders, with equally little success. His last hope was placed on the co-operation of the exiled nobles and knights in Scotland, and the disaffected in the borders and in Northumberland. A correspondence was opened with Sir Thomas Rokeby, sheriff of Yorkshire, and that gentleman is said, by Buchanan, to have lured them on in order to make their defeat certain. They advanced from Scotland into Northumberland; surprised several castles, and raised the Percy tenantry, who were attached to the old chief. Hence they marched on into Yorkshire, and having reached Knaresborough, were joined by Sir Nicholas Tempest. They crossed the Wharfe at Wetherby, and Sir Thomas Rokeby, who appears to have allowed them uninterrupted progress hitherto, that he might effectually cut off their retreat, now following them closely, overtook them on Bramham Moor, near Tadcaster, and brought them to an engagement. The earl of Northumberland was killed in the battle, lord Bardolf was taken prisoner, but died in a few days of his wounds. Thus did the old Percy of Northumberland, after a long and hard contest to put down the man he had helped to set up, close his stormy career on the 28th of February, 1408, as his son Hotspur had done five years before at Shrewsbury. The bodies of the earl and of lord Bardolf were cut in quarters and sent to London and other towns, where they were exposed.

Henry was in full march to encounter the insurgents when he was met by the pleasing intelligence of their defeat and death. He proceeded to Pontefract, where he continued for a month, busily employed in punishing and fining the prisoners of any rank or substance who had been taken at the battle. He was in pressing need of money, and he coined as much out of ransoms as possible. The abbot of Hayles, having taken arms, was executed like a layman, as the archbishop of York had been before.

There remained now, of all Henry's enemies within the kingdom, only the Welsh to subdue. The contest between Owen Glendower and prince Henry had now been going on for upwards of four years, with every demonstration of art, activity, and bravery with which two such commanders could conduct a difficult contest amongst mountains and marshes. Glendower, one of the most devoted patriots, and most spirited and able generals that are to be found in history, had disputed every inch of ground with unconquerable pugnacity and never-exhausted stratagem. He may be said to have taught Henry of Monmouth that discipline and military science which afterwards enabled him to win the battle of Azincourt, and achieve such brilliant triumphs in France. But Henry, full of youth and martial ardour, and supported from England by troops and provisions, was an antagonist who was sure, in time, to bear down the limited means of Glendower. During nearly five years he had completely reduced South Wales, and was slowly but steadily advancing in the north.

In the summer of 1409 Glendower, finding his indefatigable young enemy steadily advancing upon him, and the support of the disheartened and plundered people growing weaker, determined to make one desperate effort, to supply himself with provisions, and to inflict a severe punishment, even if it were the last, upon the foe. He therefore sent all the forces he could muster, under the command of his two bravest officers, his son-in-law, Philpot Scudamore, and Rees ap Dhu, to make a grand foray in Shropshire. These commanders executed their commission with great bravery and ferocity; but they were at length defeated,

their troops cut to pieces, and themselves taken prisoners, carried to London, and there executed.

This was the last expiring effort of the Welsh in that glorious struggle which they had maintained for ten years under their illustrious countryman, Owen ap Griffith Vaughan, better known as the unconquerable Owen Glendower. We say unconquerable, for though Wales, a small country, engaged in an unequal contest with a far greater and more wealthy nation, and with two of the most renowned generals of the age, Henry of Lancaster and his son, was compelled to yield, it is very clear from abundant historic facts, that Owen himself never retired from the struggle, never was subdued. He contrived to live on amid his native mountains, the same free, high-hearted, independent man as when, in all the pride of his youth, he quitted the temples of the law, and gave to the mountain winds the banners of his native land. Sometimes he traversed the hills that he could not emancipate disguised in the dress of a shepherd. Sometimes he managed to collect a little band of warriors, and came suddenly on the unguarded lines and lands of his English foes. Sometimes, worn out by fatigue, or driven from the woods and rocks by the storms of winter, he sought a hidden repose at his daughter's house, at Monington, in Herefordshire. But wherever he was, in whatever guise, whether that of a peasant in the lowland hut, or the soldier on the hills, he was still the unbending, unconquered patriot, of whom any country must be proud. In the Rolls of Parliament and in Rymer's "Fœdera," we find that in 1411 he was excepted by Henry in a general amnesty; in 1412 he was on foot and made prisoners; in 1416, just before the battle of Azincourt, Henry V., his old antagonist, who seems to have respected him as he deserved, commissioned Sir Gilbert Talbot to treat with Meredith, the son of Glendower, for a pacification of his father, and his still unconquered associates; and again, three months after the great triumph of Azincourt, Henry renewed the honourable overture. But Glendower was resolved to live and die free, a prince without subjects or a country, rather than the subject of the conqueror of Wales. He still, as appears by several writers yet extant, continued to haunt the wilds and mountains of Snowdon; and, if we may believe one tradition, died peaceably at his daughter's house at Monington, in 1415; while another shows us his burial-place beneath the great window of the south aisle in Bangor cathedral. Both accounts may very well be true; but, wherever Owen Glendower rests, there rests the dust of a man who only wanted a wider field and a more numerous people to have become the saviour, as he was the true hero of his country.

The nine years which Henry IV. had now been on the throne had been years of constant insurrections, bloodshed in battle, and bloodshed on the block. He had put down all his internal enemies, and, save some occasional struggles with the remaining power of Glendower in the marches of Wales, the kingdom was at peace with itself, and continued so during the few remaining years of this reign. At sea there were still attacks from the French, though the government disclaimed them, and pretended to maintain the truce between the two countries. That truce, however, had been badly preserved in regard to the English provinces in France. In 1406 the Constable of France and the count of Armagnac had made extensive inroads on Guienne and Saintonge. According to the complaint of Sir John Tibetot, the speaker of the House of Commons, they had taken ninety-six towns and castles there. Nothing, indeed, but the miserable and distracted condition of France could have prevented them taking the whole, and driving the English totally out of that kingdom; for Henry, perpetually occupied in battling with his own insurgent subjects, had neither money, men, nor time to devote to his French provinces. The most pitiable entreaties were sent over from time to time for aid, but in vain; Henry was engaged in a life and death struggle at home.

In 1406 there were great efforts made on the part of the French court to seize the tempting opportunity to gain possession of all Henry's continental territories. The two most powerful nobles of the realm were commissioned to execute this great enterprise. The duke of Orleans, the king's brother, was to lead the forces against Guienne, whilst the duke of Burgundy, called "John Sans-peur," or the Fearless, was to expel the English from Calais. Both of these schemes were absolute failures. The duke of Orleans, who, though the king's brother, lived in shameless adultery with the queen, had secured the king's daughter, Isabella, the late queen of England, for his eldest son, the count of Angoulême, and the betrothment was now celebrating with great fêtes and rejoicings. The poor young queen, who had known nothing but trouble in her English marriage, now was about to be introduced into a fresh series of calamities, from which, however, she was freed by an early death. She wept bitterly at pledging her hand to her new husband, which the French attributed to her losing, by this act, the title of the queen of England; but her own attendants, to the fact of her retaining an unshaken and affectionate memory of king Richard. She might have wept in prophetic sorrow, for, though her husband, much younger than herself, was extremely attached to her, the whole circumstances of the family were such as were not only disgraceful at the present moment, but speedily produced murder and civil distraction.

At present, however, all went "merry as a marriage bell," and not only the duke of Orleans, the commander-in-chief of the expedition against Guienne, but the other royal officers, the counts of Clermont and Alençon, left the army, and were deeply engaged in the matrimonial gaieties of Paris.

When they were over, these exemplary generals set out for their camps; but the season was then past for action, and, therefore, instead of fighting, Orleans and his princely and aristocratic officers endeavoured to amuse themselves during the miserably wet and stormy weather by gambling, while their troops were suffering all the extremities of famine and cold, destitute of food or proper tents. Having spent all the money provided for the campaign, they rode back to Paris, followed by the curses of the soldiers, and received by the murmurs of the people.

John the Fearless of Burgundy had shown the same wonderful generalship against the town of Calais, so desirable as it was to recover it from the English. He cut down a whole forest to construct machines which should batter down the walls, and burst in the gates of that strongly-fortified town, and reduce the houses to heaps of ruins by flinging in whole rocks. He was provided with two hundred pieces of cannon, and the most complete success was anticipated from his efforts. They resulted in nothing, and, like the duke of Orleans, he returned to Paris complaining

of not having been supplied with sufficient funds, and demanding not only the costs of his useless machinery, but immense sums which he asserted had been due to his father. These he was not very likely to obtain, for France, Paris, and the court were in the most wretched condition of anarchy and exhaustion imaginable. The malady of the king, recurring fits of insanity, had left the government in the hands of the contending princes, especially of Orleans and Burgundy. The queen and Orleans, united in a guilty alliance, managed to keep the main power in their hands. The king was a cipher, and the country a ruin. At this time the royal household had not even food, except such as it took by force from the bakers, butchers, and dealers, in which they were imitated by the great nobles.

To this unhappy condition of things was now added the fierce disputes and recriminations of the rival dukes, but Orleans, supported by the queen's interest, maintained his stand, and Burgundy, in high dudgeon and disgust, retired to his own dominions, vowing vengeance against his great opponent.

The duke of Berri, uncle to both the contending princes, exerted himself to effect a reconciliation between them, and prevent the menaced civil strife, in addition to the already crushing calamities of France. In this he at length appeared successful; but the success was only apparent, the result was really tragical. Burgundy returned to Paris, visited the duke of Orleans, who was somewhat indisposed, and there appeared the most cordial reconciliation. The duke of Berri, enchanted with the happy effect of his good offices, on the 30th of November, 1407, accompanied his two nephews to the church of the Augustines to hear mass, and there these seemingly amicable relatives took the sacrament together in token of their perfectly reconciled minds. In three days after, Orleans was murdered in the Rue Barbette, by eighteen assassins in the pay of his dear friend, the newly-reconciled and forgiving Burgundy. What was worse, it came out that both these thoroughly depraved princes had entertained the same design of despatching his rival, and that Burgundy had only got the start with his assassins. Burgundy absented himself from Paris for a short time, when he returned again, and boldly justified his deed. The king, who was at the moment in one of his more lucid intervals, wept over the fate of his brother, and vowed to avenge it; but the power of Burgundy was beyond that of the feeble monarch.

The Orleans family was vehement for vengeance. Isabella, the former queen of England, now joined her mother-in-law the duchess dowager in this demand of justice from her father. She came with the widowed duchess in a chariot covered with black cloth, and followed by a long train of mourning carriages filled with their domestics. The two ladies sat in front of their chariot weeping, and thus they arrived at the gates of Paris. There they were met by most of the princes of the blood, and this mournful procession passed through the streets of the capital to the gates of the hotel de St. Pol, where Isabella threw herself at the feet of her wretched father Charles VI., crying for justice on the murderer of her uncle. She cried in vain, the poor king was fast sinking again into his delirium, and twelve months afterwards Isabella again joined the dowager duchess of Orleans in a similar procession, to seek the same justice from her brother, the dauphin Louis, who was acting as regent, but with equal want of success; and the old duchess sank and died in despair of punishment on her enemy. The marriage of Isabella to Charles, now duke of Orleans, took place soon after these events, and, as already related, she died in 1410, in giving birth to an infant daughter.

The Orleans family, finding that no justice was to be obtained from the feeble and corrupt government, but, on the contrary, that the people of Paris hailed John of Burgundy as a second Brutus, who had freed his country of a tyrant aiming at the crown, and that the very lawyers and clergy justified the murder on the same pleas, declaring that Orleans had produced the king's insanity through sorcery and drugs, determined to take arms and enforce it for themselves.

Burgundy, to strengthen himself with the Parisians, promised to reduce the monstrous weight of taxation under which they groaned, and they applauded him as their saviour. Revolt amongst Burgundy's subjects in Flanders withdrew him for a time from Paris, during which the queen, in the name of her son, the dauphin, declared Burgundy an enemy of the state, and threw all her energies into the interests of the Orleanists. But Burgundy returned victorious from his contest with his subjects, and in November entered Paris at the head of six thousand men.

Once more, in the following March, the farce of a reconciliation took place between Burgundy and the young duke of Orleans, at Chartres, where the children of Orleans embraced their father's murderer. But this base and unnatural union was as hollow as the former one; all the old animosity burst forth anew; and the young duke of Orleans, who had lost the amiable Isabella, and married a daughter of the count of Armagnac, was supported by that able and energetic nobleman in his opposition to Burgundy. From this day the whole of France was divided into the great hostile factions—the Orleanists and the Armagnacs—so called from the count of Armagnac assuming the lead in his son-in-law's quarrel by his superior vigour and experience. The dukes of Berri and Brittany, and the count d'Alençon, embraced the cause of Orleans, and Burgundy was compelled to retire from Paris.

Henry IV., relieved from his own domestic foes, had watched this contest from the commencement with the deepest interest. His calculating soul saw that now the time was coming for him to take vengeance on France for its insults and injuries during the whole period of his struggles with his rebellious nobles. Into Henry's mind no feeling of commiseration for the sufferings of the French people was likely to enter; his very intellectual constitution was policy; his feelings led him only towards self-advancement. He foresaw that the first failing combatant would turn to him for aid, and he determined that it should be granted, because it would damage France. What he knew must come came now; and it was the more agreeable because it enabled him to pay to the son of Orleans the debt of hate which he owed to the father for his haughty defiance and his taunts of murder.

Burgundy solicited his aid, and it was immediately granted in the shape of a thousand archers and eight hundred men-at-arms. Perhaps there might be a secret fellow-feeling, which made Henry "thus wondrously kind;" for it was one murderer succouring another. Burgundy, with this force, formidable though small—for the fame of

the English bowmen in France was not forgotten—drove the Orleanists from Paris, and took their place in October of 1411, amid the acclamations of the people. Burgundy had now secured the persons of the king and the dauphin, and with this semblance of being the royal party, he marched against the Orleanists, and besieged them in Bourges. In their retreat from Paris they had plundered the abbey of St. Denis, and carried off a treasure of the queen's deposited there, which naturally alienated the mind of that lady.

In their distress the Orleanists now in their turn sought aid from Henry of England, and it was granted with equal alacrity. Henry had satisfied his resentment against the Orleans family by punishing and humbling them; and he was rendered placable by still more powerful motives. The Orleanists offered very tempting terms. They offered to acknowledge him as the rightful duke of Aquitaine, and to assist him to recover all the ancient rights and lands of that duchy. They agreed to hold of him, as their feudal lord, whatever they possessed there; to restore to him twenty towns which had been severed from it; and to give security that on the deaths of the present lords, the counties of Angoulême and Ponthieu should return to him and his successors. Henry, on his part, agreed to assist them as his faithful vassals in all their just quarrels; to enter into no treaty with the duke of Burgundy or his family without their consent; and to send at once to their assistance three thousand archers and one thousand men-at-arms, to serve for three months at the proper wages, which are stated to be, men-at-arms, one shilling and sixpence, and archers ninepence per day.

The news of this convention altered greatly the position of the contending parties. The Armagnacs received the duke of Burgundy with an unusual display of spirit. The duke of Berri threw himself, with eight hundred men-at-arms, into Bourges, and threatened to defend it while a man was left. But there was a large party in France who beheld with alarm and sorrow their common country thus torn by her own children, and the English, who had aforetime perpetrated such horrors there, thus introduced by them. Their utmost exertions were used to reconcile the hostile factions; and happily they succeeded. Burgundy met his uncle, the duke of Berri, at an appointed place outside the walls of Bourges, where an accommodation was agreed upon; and as a means of making the peace permanent, the duke of Burgundy agreed to give one of his daughters to a younger brother of Orleans. The two leaders took a very extraordinary mode of convincing the people of the sincerity of their alliance. They rode into the city both mounted on one horse; and the spectators, transported with joy at the sight, shouted with all their might, and sang "Gloria in excelsis."

In the midst of this exultation, the news arrived that Thomas duke of Clarence, the second son of king Henry, had landed in Normandy, with four thousand men, and was joined by the counts of Alençon and Richmont. A deputation was immediately despatched to inform the English leader of the peace, and to beg him to retire, as his aid was no longer needed. But Clarence naturally demanded the payment of the expenses of the expedition; and, as they were not forthcoming, he advanced through Normandy into Maine, laying waste the country as he proceeded; while another body of English from Calais occupied great part of Artois. Six hundred men-at-arms hastened to the standard of the duke, who overran and plundered Maine and Anjou. Attempts were made, by promises of payment, to gain time for the assembling of troops; but Clarence was deaf to any such decoys. He had a very simple course laid down for him by his deeply calculating father: to do all the mischief he could in repayment of the various descents of the French on the English coasts, and their destruction of the English merchant ships; and by this very mischief to compel the government to liberal terms for his withdrawal.

As there was no money in the national exchequer, there was a loud cry to arms, but it was very feebly responded to. Meantime, Clarence having overrun Maine and Anjou, prepared to invade the duchy of Orleans; this had the effect of bringing the young duke to the English camp with all the money he could muster, and having arranged with the invader for the payment of the whole cost of the expedition, two hundred and nine thousand crowns, he left his brother, the duke of Angoulême, as hostage in Clarence's hands for its payment.

On this, the duke of Clarence did not quit the country, as was hoped, but marched on into Guienne, forbidding his troops to commit further devastations by the way, but allowing them to inform the inhabitants as they went along that they should not be long before they came again in the name of their own king Henry to carry on the war; words which were afterwards fulfilled to a terrible extent.

This was the last great operation of the reign of Henry IV. By a singular combination of tact, cool calculation, vigilant watchings of every movement around him, and a purpose which was delayed through no conscientious scruples, nor weakened by a single tender feeling, he had put down all his foes. He was at peace at home and abroad. Not a man was left alive who dared to tell him that he was a usurper, except the undaunted Glendower, and he was too far off amid his mountains to be heard. He was the most sagacious and successful monarch in Europe, and perhaps its most miserable man.

Though by nature not peculiarly sanguinary or ferocious, the ambition of mounting a throne had led him into the deepest crimes and through torrents of blood. Had his title been good and his throne unassailed, he might have won the character of a mild and even excellent monarch, though it is not probable that he could under any circumstances have won the character of a generous or magnanimous one. But stung by the taunts and nerved by the determined hostility of his enemies, he defended himself with the vigour of a giant, and punished his fallen opponents with the deadly cruelty of the tiger. In the ardour of his active strife, called now here, now there, to encounter foes continually springing like the teeth of Cadmus from the earth, he seemed insensible to the feeling that his crown was a theft, and his throne was the tomb of his murdered sovereign and near kinsman. He received with a face smooth as the visage of a statue, unimpressed by a feeling, unclouded by a frown, the sharpest words of his many enemies, crowned and uncrowned, hissing murder at him between their teeth; yet all the while his very soul winced and withered within him, and the deadly hand of remorse pulled at his heart-strings. While youth remained, and rapid and incessant action engrossed him, he seemed to soar above all the feelings and fears of an

ordinary man. He boldly replied to those who upbraided him with his criminal seizure of his cousin's crown and realm, that the successful issue announced the approbation of the Almighty. But his health decayed prematurely. His body had been overworked, his mind had been overtasked, his conscience had been overburdened. As his strength gave way his stoicism gave way with it. In his youth he has been described as gay and agreeable, and in his most active years, even when overwhelmed with business and menaced by the greatest dangers, he was cheerful, affable, ready to converse with the people that he came amongst; as disease and debility announced a not distant end, he grew gloomy, retiring, ascetic in his devotions, and suspicious even of his own son.

His false position had forced on him every species of false conduct, and deeds which brought their certain punishment. There is every reason to believe that he sacrificed his sincere conviction of the truth of the Protestant doctrines, in order to purchase the powerful sanction of the church for his unrighteous title; for before his usurpation he went along with his father in the protection of Wycliffe and the Lollards. To please the hierarchy he persecuted the Lollards, and was the first to give his sanction to the death of religious dissentients by the terrible means of fire. Yet, as if Providence would punish his apostacy by a striking antithesis, he was compelled by the rebellion of an archbishop to be the first in England to visit with capital punishment a prelate of the established church.

Owen Glendower. From his Seal, engraved in the "Archæologia."

It is curious that soon after his execution of the archbishop of York, he was attacked by the most loathsome eruptions on the face, or, as it appears to have been, an inveterate leprosy. This the people naturally believed to be a judgment from heaven upon him for that sacrilegious act, and probably some such conviction might haunt his own mind. Though in stature somewhat below the middle size, he was vigorously and finely formed. His features were regularly beautiful in his youth, and in some of his penitential communications he confessed to having been greatly proud of them. But, by the ravages of this repulsive complaint, they became so hideous that he was compelled at length to avoid appearing in public. To this were added attacks of epilepsy, which became more and more violent, so that he would lie in death-like trances for hours.

As Henry declined in health, he seems to have grown increasingly jealous of the popularity of his son, the prince of Wales. The young prince had acquired great glory by his conduct at the battle of Shrewsbury, and in his warfare against Owen Glendower. He was free, jocund, fond of pleasure, and of mixing with all classes of the people. Shakespeare has made his life and character the most living and familiar of things. He has surrounded him by a set of jolly companions, the fat and witty Sir John Falstaff, Bardolph, "mine ancient Pistol," and the whole band of roysterers who haunted the Boar's Head, Eastcheap. He has drawn his inimitable portraiture of the merry prince Hal from the chroniclers of the time, who describe him as the idol of the people. He was as dissipated as an heir-apparent generally is, but with his follies he displayed what his father never possessed, a generous temperament. No sooner was he on the throne than he offered terms of pacification to his most persevering enemy, Owen Glendower. The anecdote of his conduct before judge Gascoigne has been represented as doubtful by some of our modern historians, but it is gravely related by Hardyng and Elmham, his contemporaries, and there is, therefore, no just right to question it.

One of the prince's associates had been arraigned for felony before chief-justice Gascoigne, the upright magistrate whom we have seen refusing to execute his father's illegal acts at York. The prince appeared before the magistrate and peremptorily demanded the release of his boon companion. The chief-justice refused, and Henry drew his sword upon him, and swore that he would have the man liberated. The judge coolly ordered the prince to be committed to prison himself as a greater offender, because he was, by his position, bound expressly to be a maintainer of the laws. Henry at once, in the innate nobility of his own nature, felt and admired the lofty virtue of the magistrate. He submitted quietly to his order, and it is related that when the fact was mentioned to his father, he said, "Happy is the monarch who possesses a judge so resolute in the discharge of his duty, and a son so willing to yield to the authority of the law."

But, however happy Henry might express himself in such a son, it seems clear from cotemporary writers that he kept him as much as possible from any participation in the affairs of state, and it is probable that this want of fitting employment threw him amongst his dissolute associates in order to pass his time. In the excited and unguarded hours of wild merriment, there were not wanting those who gathered up his thoughtless expressions against the conduct of his father, and bore them to the royal ear, coloured as malice or sycophancy dictated. It is certain that Henry entertained grave suspicions of his son. Knowing how he had offended in respect to the crown himself, he was more ready to believe it possible that his son might tread in his

JUDGE GASCOIGNE AND PRINCE HENRY. (See page 510.)

steps. The prince made repeated endeavours to disabuse his father's mind of these unworthy ideas, but in vain. According to Otterburn he wrote to many of the lords letters justifying his allegiance to his father, and even went with a numerous train to demand an explanatory interview with him. Yet the Earl of Ormond, an eye-witness, says that even on this occasion the prince could not lay aside his eccentricities. That "he disguised himself in a gown of blue satin or damask, wrought full of oylet-holes, and at every oylet the needle wherewith it was made, hanging still by the silk, and about his arm he wore a dog's collar, set full of SS. of gold, and the tirets of the same of fine gold."

He was received by the king in his closet, attended by four friends, and the prince, throwing himself on his knees before him, begged that he would take his life, seeing that he had withdrawn from him the royal favour.

Henry passed the last Christmas of his life at his favourite palace of Eltham. So complete was his seclusion, owing both to his illness, and the awful disfigurement of his person, that he scarcely saw any one but the queen; lying frequently for hours without any sign of life. After Candlemas, he was so much better as to be able to keep his birthday, and he then returned to his palace at Westminster. He was at his devotions in the abbey, at the shrine of St. Edward, when his last fatal fit seized him. He was removed into the apartments of the abbot, and laid in the celebrated Jerusalem chamber. The fit lasted so long that prince Henry, who was present, knowing the plunder which often took place at the deathbeds of kings, and which was remarkably the case at that of Edward III., ordered the crown to be removed to another and securer apartment.

On coming to himself Henry asked where he was, and being told in the Jerusalem chamber, he regarded his last hour as come, for it had been predicted to him that he should finish his days in Jerusalem; and he had vowed, in expiation of his crimes, to make a pilgrimage thither. The days of the crusades were over, but a remarkable visit made to him soon after he ascended the throne, by Manuel Palæologus, the emperor of Constantinople, when seeking aid against the Saracens, probably impressed his mind with this idea. He then requested that the *Miserere* should be read to him, which contains an especial prayer for forgiveness of "blood-guiltiness." Then looking round he missed the crown from its place, and demanded to know where it was. The scenes which followed have been faithfully and beautifully copied by Shakespeare.

"Ah! fair son," said the dying king; "what right have you to the crown, when you know that your father had none?"

"My liege," answered young Henry; "with the sword you won it, and with the sword I will keep it."

"Well," replied the king, faintly, "do as you think best. I leave the issue to God, and may He have mercy on my soul." And then followed that beautiful address so finely rendered in Shakespeare:—

"Come hither, Henry; sit thou on my bed," &c.

Henry IV. was in the forty-seventh year of his age, and the fourteenth year of his reign, when he died. Perhaps no king by the troubles of his reign, the corroding remorse of his soul, and wretchedness of his last days, ever presented a more striking warning from Providence against guilty ambition. Had he resolved, in the days of his cousin Richard's misgovernment, to exert the influence which his eminent position, foremost in the realm, next to the throne, and his distinguished talents gave him, to check that monarch's arbitrary extravagances, and support him in the right, he might have won one of the most honoured names in history, the patriot of the age, and the father of his country. He yielded to a meaner ambition, that of wearing a pilfered crown; and the consequences were fatal to him, fatal to his family, and fatal to his nation. We shall yet have to wade far through the blood he caused to flow, and in another generation see his line driven from the throne he so unwisely usurped.

It is curious that as Henry usurped the throne of Richard II., he also usurped, as far as in him lay, his tomb. The body of Richard he sent to be buried at Langley, instead of permitting it to rest with the ashes of his father, the Black Prince; but there his own body was ordered to be conveyed, for he had expressed a superstitious desire that he should lie near the shrine of Thomas à Becket. Yet the fact that he really does lie there has been called in question by a very extraordinary relation by a cotemporary. It is given in the following "Testimony of Clement Maydestone," translated from a Latin manuscript in the library of Bennet College, Cambridge, 1440:—

"Thirty days after the death of Henry IV., Sept. 14th, 1412" (this should be March 20th, 1413), "one of his domestics came to the House of the Holy Trinity, at Hounslow, and dined there. And as the bystanders were talking at dinner-time of the king's irreproachable morals, this man said to a certain esquire named Thomas Maydestone, then sitting at table, 'Whether he was a good man or not, God knows: but of this I am certain, that when his corpse was carried from Westminster towards Canterbury by water, in a small vessel, in order to be buried there, I and two more threw his corpse into the sea between Berkenham and Gravesend; for,' he added with an oath, 'we were overtaken by such a storm of winds and waves that many of the nobility who followed in eight ships, were dispersed so as with difficulty to escape being lost. But we, who were with the body, despairing of our lives, with one consent threw it into the sea, and a great calm ensued. The coffin in which it lay, covered with a cloth of gold, we carried with great solemnity to Canterbury, and buried it. The monks of Canterbury, therefore, say that the tomb not the body of Henry IV. is with us, as Peter said of holy David.' As God Almighty is my witness and judge, I saw this man, and heard him speak to my father, T. Maydestone, that all the above was true.

"Clement Maydestone."

This singular account being published by Peck, it was thought desirable to ascertain the truth of it by opening the coffin of Henry, which was done on the 21st of August, 1832, in the presence of the bishop of Oxford, Lady Harriet and Sir Charles Bagot, and others. It was found in sawing away part of the lid of the wooden coffin that there was also a leaden coffin within it, but so small that the outer coffin had been filled up with haybands, which were very sound and perfect. The leaden coffin appeared moulded to the body within it, and on cutting that open the face of the corpse was discovered in perfect preservation; the nose elevated, the cartilage even remaining, though, on the admission of the air, it rapidly sank away. The skin of the

chin entire, of the consistence, thickness, and colour of the upper leather of a shoe; the beard thick and matted, of a deep russet colour; the jaws perfect, and all the teeth in them, excepting one fore-tooth.

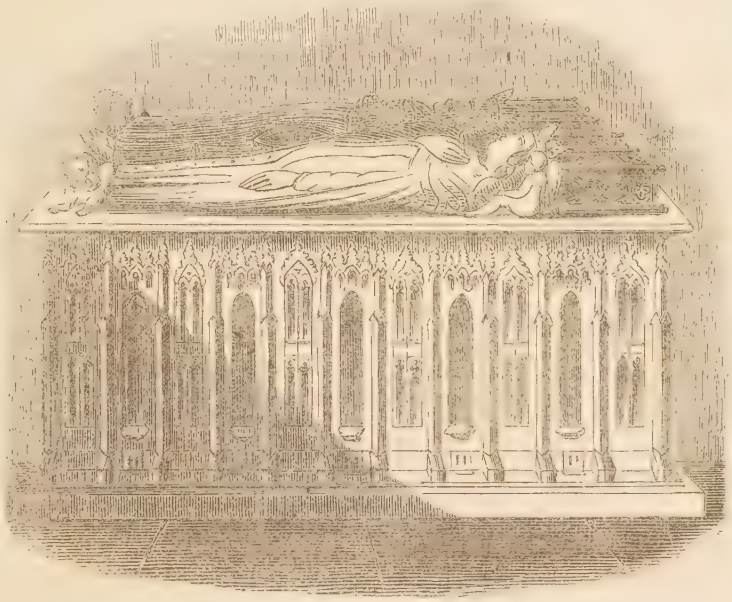
Though there was a body, the question still remains, was it the body of Henry IV.? Was it likely that an outer coffin would be made so large as to require packing? and if so, would that packing for a royal corpse be of haybands? There was a very small cross found lying on the haybands, not such, surely, as would be laid on the breast of a sovereign, for it was formed merely of two twigs tied together. Is it not the probable explanation of the affair that the attendants robbed the corpse of the cloth of gold in which it was wrapped, and then threw it into the river, replacing it by another corpse in lead procured for the occasion? It has been well observed that the perfect state of the skin of the supposed Henry's face does not accord with the fearful leprosy with which Henry was afflicted.

Henry IV. was twice married. His first wife was Mary de Bohun, daughter and co-heir of the earl of Hereford. By her he had four sons and two daughters. Henry was his successor to the throne, Thomas was duke of Clarence, John, duke of Bedford, and Humphrey, duke of Gloucester. His eldest daughter, Blanche, was married to the duke of Bavaria, and the second to the king of Denmark.

Conscious of the defect of his title, Henry was careful to avoid, on ascending the throne, asking for any act of settlement. He contented himself with receiving the oath of allegiance from parliament to himself, and after himself to his eldest son or heir apparent. But after the battle of Shrewsbury he introduced a bill resting the succession on his four sons, but excluding his daughters. But on being reminded that to exclude his daughters annihilated all his claim to the throne of France, he reluctantly consented to the passing of an act admitting the general issue of his sons, but still passing over that of his daughters, as if fearful to bring in some foreign aspirant.

By his second wife, Joanna of Navarre, daughter of Charles the Bad, he had no children. Joanna made a much better queen than might have been expected from her parentage. Her worst faults appear to have been a great fondness for money, and for a numerous train of French attendants, which obliged parliament frequently to interfere, as did that of Charles I., and insist on their being sent home. She was handsome in person, but had the reputation of being addicted to the arts of necromancy, no doubt arising from the evil reputation of her father. We shall hear of her again in the next reign.

The defect of Henry's title was a circumstance favourable to the progress of the constitution, though prolific of much con-



Tomb of Henry IV. and his Queen, in Westminster Abbey.

troversy and bloodshed. Compelled to court the good-will of the people, and to come to them often for money, the House of Commons availed themselves of this circumstance to increase in their demands of privilege and liberty. We shall notice more particularly these advances when we come to review, at a future date, the progress of the nation; and, therefore, it will only be necessary here to glance at them cursorily. In his very first year they passed a law depriving the crown of the power of protecting an unjust judge. In the second, they insisted on the removal of obnoxious persons from his household, and prevailed; in the sixth, they appointed treasurers to superintend the expenditure of the supplies; in the eighth, they enacted thirty articles for the regulation of the royal household, and compelled the judges, the council, and all the officers of the household to swear to the observance of them. The practice of the crown corrupting parliament had shown itself in the reign of Richard II., and was now rife, through the means of the

sheriffs. The Commons obtained an act to compel them to make just returns. They even went so far, when pressed by the king for money, to recommend him to seize the surplus temporalities of the church, which they represented as containing eighteen thousand four hundred ploughs of land, producing four hundred and eighty-five thousand marks a year, equal to £4,750,745 of our present money.

Here, however, the king stood firm against the recommendation of the Commons; and even, to oblige the church, he consented to the passing of the first law for the burning of heretics, that is, persons who dared to differ in opinion from the religion of the state; and, in accordance with this barbarous act, William Sawtre, rector of Lynn in Norfolk, and afterwards curate of St. Osith's in London, the first English martyr, was burnt at the stake on the 10th of March, 1401.

None of our historians have given a more masterly summary of Henry IV. and his reign in a few words than Henry. He says:—"His head was better than his heart; his schemes being formed with prudence and generally successful, but not always innocent, and seldom generous. As jealous as he was fond of power, he stuck at nothing to obtain and keep it. From policy more than from principle, he protected the church and persecuted heretics. Ambition was his ruling passion, and that, impelled by a violent gale of popular favour, hurried him into a throne, which involved him in many crimes and cares, and his country in many calamities. He would have been a better and happier man if he had never been a king."

CHAPTER LXX.

Reign of Henry the Fifth—Youthful Follies of the King—Sudden Reformation—The Lollard Insurrection—Escape of Lord Cobham—Henry claims the Crown of France—Invasion of France—Siege of Harfleur—March from Harfleur to Azincourt—The Great Victory of Azincourt—Henry's Enthusiastic Reception in England—League with the Duke of Burgundy—Arrival of the Emperor Sigismund in England—Distracted State of France—Second Invasion of France aided by Burgundy—Rapid Progress of the English—Massacre in Paris by the French Factions—Henry's Truce with the Armagnacs—Siege and Surrender of Rouen.

The short reign of Henry V. is like a chapter of romance. It is the history of the life of a prince who was especially a hero. Young, handsome, accomplished, not only in arms but in learning, skilled in and fond of music, valorous, chivalrous, generous, and successful to the very height of human glory in arms, he lived beloved and died young, the pride of his native country, whose martial fame he raised above that of all others, and the wonder of the world at large. He is one of those rare sovereigns who have run a brief but brilliant career, which seems rather to belong to the realm of imagination and poetry, than that of common-place realities of life. Amongst the numerous tribe of heroes, the class is small, and while we involuntarily place in it Achilles, Alexander the Great, Cœur de Lion of England, Henry IV. of France, and Charles XII. of Sweden, we look almost in vain to others to add to the group. We exclude from it the adventurers inspired by the lust of universal conquest, the Genghis Khans and Napoleons; and not less so the Tells and Hofers, the champions of oppressed liberty, a very different and far nobler genus. The small section of the warrior class to which Henry of Monmouth belonged are kings of acknowledged thrones, growing up in the aspirations of heroic fame, and surrounded by all the splendour and prestige of their station, doing valorous deeds in a few years of youth and early manhood, which astonish their age, and remain the fixed stars of martial fame for ever. Henry of Monmouth is one of the fairest and noblest of the tribe; for, with all the passion for military glory and the power to achieve it, he was in a great measure free from the violent passions and savage excesses of some of them. He is a prince of whom England, regarding him as belonging to its feudal period, may be justly and greatly proud, and that without a blush and almost without a regret.

Henry V. was born at Monmouth castle, belonging to the great estates of his mother, Mary de Bohun, daughter and co-heiress of the earl of Hereford. He was born in or about the year 1388, and, therefore, was about twenty-five on ascending the throne. Various particulars of the early life of this popular prince have been carefully preserved; as that he was a sickly child, was nursed at the village of Courtfield, about six miles from his native castle, and that his nurse's name was Joan Waring, for whom he showed so much regard that he settled a pension of twenty pounds a year upon her. Even his cradle is said to be still preserved at Bristol. His mother was a lady of finished education, and is declared by Froissart to have been skilled in Latin and school divinity. Probably owing to her influence, he received a superior education also to the princes of his time. His mother died when he was but a child, but his grandmother, the old countess of Hereford, saw that it was continued, and she had the satisfaction of living to see him the conqueror of Azincourt. He early displayed a taste for music, and was particularly fond of the harp. He was afterwards sent to Oxford, and a room is pointed out in Queen's College as that which he occupied as a student. A portrait of Henry was painted on the glass of the window, no doubt after he had become famous, with this inscription beneath it in Latin verse:—"To record the fact for ever that the Emperor of Britain, the triumphant lord of France, the conqueror of his enemies in himself, Henry V., was once the great inhabitant of this chamber." Henry was there under the tutorship of his half-uncle, Henry Beaufort, a son of John of Gaunt, by Catherine Sweynford, and afterwards cardinal Beaufort.

When Richard II. banished his father he took charge of Henry; and Henry V., on coming to the throne, took the earliest opportunity of testifying his regard for Richard's memory. Richard continued the education of Henry in his own palace; he took him along with him on his last expedition to Ireland, and there dubbed him a knight-banneret for his bravery in a dangerous skirmish with the natives. When he was suddenly recalled to England by the return of Henry's father from his banishment, he left Henry with his cousin, Humphrey duke of Gloucester, in the castle of Trim, in Westmeath. Henry of Lancaster soon sent for his son, and he joined him at Chester on his march to London.

On his father's coronation he was made heir presumptive and created prince of Wales; and when only fifteen he fought his first great battle at Shrewsbury, and there won his spurs. Though we have seen him valiantly fighting for five or six years against Owen Glendower, yet his father's jealousy of him had kept him so completely out of both the council and all state affairs, that he was obliged to amuse his active mind by those youthful dissipations and escapades which have gained him a merry immortality from the pen of Shakespeare. In those nar-

ratives of prince Hal's wild life the dramatic poet, however, appears to have invented little; though, for obvious reasons, he has given other names and characteristics to some of the prince's companions. Even where he is made to assist in a robbery at Gadshill, there appears to have been nothing introduced but what was perfectly historical. Henry IV. was not only so constantly on the stretch for money himself to defray the costs of his civil contentions, but the young prince of Wales was left so destitute of funds by the rebellion of his Welsh tenants, by the consumption of his English rents to subdue them, and by his father's parsimony, that Stowe in his Annals says:—"The prince used to disguise himself and lie in wait for the receivers of the crown lands, or of his father's patrimony, and, in the disguise of a highwayman, set upon them and rob them. In such encounters he sometimes got soundly beaten; but he always rewarded such of his father's officers who made the stoutest resistance." He is said to have found all that amusement in the terrors and regrets of the people robbed by him and his companions, which the poet has so livingly described.

It is a curious fact that, in the place of the fictitious Sir John Falstaff, the afterwards celebrated Sir John Oldcastle, lord Cobham, is said to have been the chief companion of the prince on these occasions; but, as Sir John became the leader of the Lollards, and as in Shakespeare's time Protestantism was in the ascendant under queen Elizabeth, a new character was substituted, and adorned with the name, slightly changed, of Sir John Falstaff, a knight of the same period.

The fears which prince Henry's wildness had created in the mind of his father, who seemed to anticipate in his son another Richard II., do not appear to have been at all participated in by the people. They saw in the prince too many proofs of a clear, strong, and generous spirit to doubt of his ultimate conduct. The cold and ungenerous nature of his father, his continual demands on their purses, to put down the enemies his criminal ambition had raised around him; his murder of Richard II., and his many executions of his opponents, members of the noblest families of the realm, had completely weaned their affections from him, and they looked with the most lenient eyes on the jollities and practical jokes of his more warm-hearted son.

The manner in which Henry justified these expectations immediately on the death of his father must have been particularly flattering to the sagacious foresight of the public, and is a circumstance which a poet might conceive as a fine act of an intrinsically great mind temporarily occupied by the levities of youth, rather than one which is of frequent occurrence. On the contrary, it is of a nature as rare as it is beautiful.

We are told that the prince held his merry and even riotous court at Cheylesmore, near Coventry, an estate belonging to his duchy of Cornwall; and thither flocked the young, and, indeed, the more mature nobility, to such a degree that that of his father was almost wholly deserted; and that Henry IV. regarded this circumstance with peculiar jealousy. Not only had the chief justice Gascoigne, as we have seen, committed the prince to confinement, but John Hornsby, the mayor of Coventry, had done the same for some violation of the law's decorum while residing at Cheylesmore. But no sooner was his father dead than he withdrew to his closet, and spent the remainder of the day in private devotion, in reviewing his past life, and taking resolves for the future. The consequence was that in the evening he hastened to his confessor, a recluse in the church at Westminster, to whom he confided his views, and who confirmed him joyfully in his noble determination.

The world, therefore, saw him at once break like a sun from obscuring clouds, and, casting off all the habits as well as costume of wild gaiety, stand before it a grave and wise king, "severe in youthful beauty." He summoned before him the whole troop of his dissolute companions, announced to them that the days of the jovial prince were for ever past, and those of the serious and moral king were come. He bade them take, if they could, the new pattern of his life; but, till that was strictly done, to appear no more in his presence. Saying this, he dismissed them with liberal proofs of his bounty; and Henry V. had as completely put off the jovial prince of Wales as if he had never been. This was great, and novel in its greatness; but it was only the lowest step of this remarkable reform. He not only banished from him the associates of his past follies, but he called forward and distinguished by his favour and approbation all those who had discharged their duty to the state faithfully, though in doing it they had dared to disapprove of his own conduct, and even to lay him under unceremonious restraint. The base and obsequious found to their astonishment that they had lost instead of won his favour. Those who apprehended his wrath for the fulfilment of stern duties, were agreeably cheered to find themselves appreciated and advanced. The upright chief justice Gascoigne stood first and foremost in the full sunshine of his favour.

This was the second step in the scale of his wisdom and magnanimity. There was a far higher and more difficult one; but even that he ascended with the same imperial ease. He remembered with gratitude the kindness which the unfortunate Richard II. had shown him when he was a boy, the son of a banished man, at his court; and though to recognise the deposed sovereign and do justice to his memory at once condemned the usurpation of his father, and reminded the world of the flaw in his own title, such considerations did not delay his proceedings for a moment. He hastened to Langley, whither his father had had the body of Richard conveyed, and having it brought from its tomb, and laid on a rich car of state, he conducted it with royal pomp to Westminster, where it was laid in the tomb which Richard had built for his beloved wife, "the good queen Anne," of Bohemia, and where he had intimated his own desire to lie. Not only did Henry pay this affectionate mark of regard to the wishes of the unfortunate monarch, but he attended as chief mourner, and, says Fabyan, "After a solemn terment there holden, he provided that iiii tapers shuld brenne daye and nyght about his grave whyle the world endureth;" with a dole to the poor of eleven and eightpence weekly, and twenty pounds a year on the anniversary of his death.

This proceeding has been attributed to policy rather than generosity in Henry, as trusting to convince the public by it, that Richard was actually dead; but the whole of Henry's character shows that he was far above any such miserable policy; that he was as open and straightforward in following his honest convictions as he was intrepid in despising mere state tricks; and the very next fact that we have to record, proves this strikingly.

Henry could afford to pay respect to a dead monarch, but a living claimant to the throne was a more formidable thing. The earl of Marche, the true heir to the throne, was not only living, but still a young man, and had been brought up much in Henry's society. So far, however, from entertaining any jealous fear of him, like his father, he at once received him with the utmost courtesy and kindness, gave him the most unlimited freedom, and full enjoyment of all his honours and estates. He displayed the same generous disposition in reversing the attainder of the Percies, and in recalling the young lord Percy from Scotland to the full restoration of all his titles and demesnes. Still further; all those who during his father's time had sought to recommend themselves by a ruthless zeal for the Lancastrian interests, he removed from their offices, and supplied their places by men of more honourable and independent minds, without regard to party. No conduct could have been more just and noble, and, therefore, more wise, than that of the young king; and

Great Seal of Henry V

the consequence was, that he won all hearts to him, and fixed himself as firmly on the throne as if he had been descended in the strictest course from its true kings. Amongst the very first to support him in his royal position was the earl of Marche himself, who continued to the last his most faithful subject and attached friend.

But no mortal character is without its defective side, and that in Henry showed itself in regard to ecclesiastical reform. The followers of Wycliffe had now increased into a numerous body, under the name of Lollards. These followers, however, appear to have consisted chiefly of the commonalty, and to include few of the upper ranks. But amongst them was Sir John Oldcastle, as we have mentioned, a bold and able man, Sir Thomas Talbot, Sir Roger Acton, and others. Sir John Oldcastle was more commonly known as lord Cobham, having married the heiress of that nobleman, and being called to the House of Lords in right of his wife. Lord Cobham, it appears, had, while the companion of Henry, as prince of Wales, been so distinguished for his gaiety and giving in to all the prince's whims and wildnesses, that his enemies called him "the ruffian knight, commonly brought in by the commediants on their stage." For a century after his time he is represented as walking the boards of the theatre in the character which Shakespeare has now transferred, for the reasons we have mentioned, to Sir John Falstaff. Nay, even Shakespeare himself calls him Sir John Oldcastle in his first edition. But as the prince had reformed, so it appears had lord Cobham also. He had embraced the principles of the Lollards, and the ability and high character of the man inspired the church with the greatest alarm.

The church had for ages enjoyed a profound and unquestioned sway over men's minds. Since it had established its own supremacy through much persecution and many horrors under the great pagan nations of Greece and Rome, it had held on its way with a wonderful tranquillity. But this tranquillity was based on the absence of all religious inquiry and speculation. Occasionally there had been a burst of fanaticism, as that of the Pastoureaux of Flanders, that of the Flagellants and the Bianchi of Italy; but no steady attempt to introduce the religion of the Bible. So long as the great body of the people was satisfied to leave the teaching of Christian doctrine entirely in the hands of the clergy, and to bow implicitly to the dictum of the church, all was peace. But as the church had, unhappily, deemed it best to retain the Bible in its own hands, and to keep the multitude practically ignorant of its contents, it was clear that whenever the time arrived, as arrive it must, that education issued from the cloister, and entered into the secular dwelling, there would arise a war of opinion which would shake the very foundations of society, and never cease till freedom of opinion had triumphed, or till mind had sunk for ever beneath the sway of ceremony and despotism. That war had now commenced. The publication of the Bible in the vernacular tongue by Wycliffe, the preaching of his doctrines by his numerous band of poor priests, and the reflections of the people on these doctrines and their sequences, had done their work. There was a fermentation of opinion in the public mind which never could cease, if the idea of a universal and impartial

Providence, the Author of all knowledge, as of all worlds, was true, till the whole mass was leavened by the exciting principle.

The commotion now produced by the recalled Lollards was the commencement of this great war, though our historians do not seem to have perceived it, which was destined to go on, through wonderful and terrible burnings, hangings, beheadings, imprisonings, scourgings, torturings; through the groans from the thumbscrew and the wedge of the iron boot; through inquisitions and star chambers, till in assuming the office of self-inquiry and self-decision, and still more by the obstinacy with which the people maintained this novel function, began to punish and coerce. The prelates persecuted the reformers, and the reformers, raised to a sublime sense of their own right by a nearer approach to Christian truth, rebelled as vigorously. The war of opinion assumed its bitterest aspect. The church, too far removed from the experience of the primitive ages, had again to learn the power of persecution to produce that which it would destroy; that to lop the boughs of religious

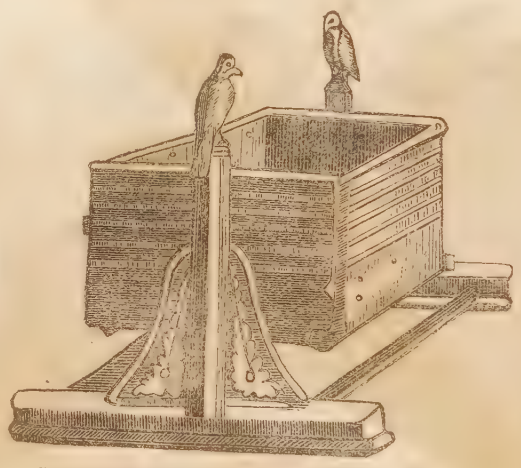
Henry V.

some countries, as Bohemia and Italy, Protestantism was exterminated; but in our country it had established itself at the Revolution of 1688, by the Act of Toleration, and yet, even here, not so wholly established itself, but that the conflict of opinion, though mollified and separated from the burning stake and the dungeon, should go on, as it will go on from age to age, still stimulating inquiry, and ultimately establishing, if not uniformity of faith, at least "the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace."

The church, startled at the new phenomenon of the laity opinion is only to strike deeper its roots; that in casting stones on a martyr, you are only piling him up a monument; that endeavouring to hew down the tree of any faith that has a sap of vitality in it, is only to scatter its seeds by every stroke of the axe, and where you level a single stem to disseminate a forest.

In a fatal hour, Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury, obtained the statute *De heretico comburendo*, by which William Sawtre had been burnt, and now again sought to apply the same deceptive remedy. With this intent he applied to

Henry for permission to indict lord Cobham, as the head and great encourager of the sect, for heresy, and by his public execution to strike terror into the whole body of reformers. Henry, however, was too averse by nature to persecution, and too mindful of his old friendship for this nobleman, to accede at once to so violent a measure. He undertook to have some conversation with lord Cobham on the subject himself, observing very truly to the primate that gentleness and persuasion were the best means of conversion. He therefore called Cobham into his closet at Windsor, and exerted the knowledge which he had acquired of school divinity at Oxford to convince his friend. But lord Cobham, fresh from the zealous perusal of the Bible itself, and from the earnest discussion of its truths amongst his Lollard associates, was more than a match for the royal casuist. He maintained the truth of his doctrines with the boldness of a man who knows that he is right, and that on questions far above all the decision of kings. It was, in fact, the very worst resolution that Henry could have come to, that of himself arguing the point with the great apostle of the new faith; for nothing so soon excites anger and resentment in the mind as religious controversy, especially where the party which has begun with high pretensions feels himself defeated. Words probably of severity arose between the king and lord Cobham, for the latter suddenly left Windsor, and withdrew to his own house of Cowling in Kent.



Cradle of Henry V.—Preserved at Monmouth Castle.

Henry now seems to have lost his tenderness towards his old friend in the awakened feeling of a determination to subdue where he failed to convince, and to have given Arundel permission to take his own way with the offender; for, immediately on lord Cobham's withdrawal, there appeared proclamations ordering all magistrates to apprehend every itinerant preacher, and directing the archbishop to proceed against Cobham according to law; that is, the recent law against heresy. This alarming measure brought back lord Cobham to Windsor, having drawn up a confession of faith, probably in conjunction with his most eminent friends. This confession still exists, subscribed by Cobham himself, and on looking it over at this time of day, one is at a loss to discover in it what any true Catholic could object to.

It begins with the apostles' creed and the doctrine of the Trinity, and then declares that no one can be saved unless he be a member of the church. "Now the church consists of three bodies:—1. Of the saints in heaven, who during life renounced Satan, the world, and the flesh. 2. Of the souls in purgatory, abiding the mercy of God, and a full deliverance of pain. 3. Of the church militant, which church is divided into three estates:—1. Of the priesthood, which ought to teach the Scripture purely, and give example of good living; 2. Of knighthood, which, having the sword, should compel the priesthood to fulfil its duty, and should seclude all false teachers; and 3. Of the common people, who ought to bear obedience to their king and civil governors, and priests."

It moreover declares that the sacraments are necessary to all believers, and that in the sacrament of the altar is contained very Christ's body and blood, that was born of the Virgin and died on the cross. "If a better faith than this," he continues, "can be taught by the word of God, the subscriber will most reverently at all times subscribe thereunto."

According to this confession, the Lollards themselves still recognised the right of compulsion by the state,—to compel, at least, the priests to do their duty, and to "seclude all false teachers." This doctrine of compulsion in religious matters accordingly descended as a heritage to the reformed church, and produced its bitter fruits of persecution in all the future reigns of the reformed sovereigns, till stemmed by William III. through the Act of Toleration.

But Henry would not even receive Cobham's confession. His blood was evidently up, and in that mood he was firm as a rock. He declared that he had nothing do to with confessions of faith; they belonged to bishops: forgetting that he had just before undertaken to expound his own faith in order to convert his heretical friend. Cobham then offered, in the spirit of the times, for he was a brave and experienced soldier, to purge himself from the charge of heresy by doing battle with any adversary, Christian or infidel, who dared to accept his challenge. But Henry simply asked him whether he would submit to the decision of the bishops, which he refused; but still, like a good Catholic, offered to appeal to the pope. Henry's only answer was to leave him to the tender mercies of Arundel, who summoned him before him, and, in conjunction with his three suffragans, the bishops of London, Winchester, and St. David's, condemned him to be burnt.

Cobham's story, and the story of the whole case of the Lollards, is unfortunately told only by their enemies, and the enemies of the Reformation. We are, therefore, necessarily required to be on our guard against exaggeration on their part, and against false charges, which so readily insinuate themselves during times of heated controversy. We find his conduct described while before his prelatical judges as bold and insolent, and theirs, on the contrary, as mild and dignified. But we are not to forget that Cobham stood there as the representative of a large, earnest, and cruelly persecuted body; a body, three of whose leaders, Sawtre, Thorpe, and Badley, had already been burnt, and who believed that they were suffering for "the faith as delivered to the saints;" that he must, therefore, feel himself bound to maintain a confidence befitting his position as the champion of the truth and the cause of the reformed public. It is not to be forgotten that he well knew that those who sat so mildly and in such calm dignity, sat there not to forgive, but to destroy him and all his fellows in the faith, and to exterminate them by the

most terrible of deaths. It is in this view of the question, then, impossible not to recognise in lord Cobham, not the insolent demagogue, but the brave and undaunted defender of great principles, and of the popular liberty.

"He maintained," says Lingard, "that the church had ceased to teach the doctrine of the gospel from the moment that it became infected with the poison of worldly riches; that the clergy were the antichrist; that the pope was the head, the bishops and prelates the limbs, and the religious orders the tail of the beast. That the only true successor of St. Peter was he who most faithfully practised the virtues of St. Peter." And that then, turning to the spectators and extending his arms, he exclaimed, "Beware of the men who sit here as my judges. They will seduce both you and themselves, and will lead you to hell."

But there is that direct discrepancy between this statement and the confession just preceding it, that we must regard the latter representation as exaggerated or distorted. To appeal to the pope and acknowledge his authority in the one, and describe him as the antichrist and the beast in the other, is too glaringly absurd to be true of a man like lord Cobham. The upshot, however, of the trial was, that which had been determined on from the first; after two days' hearing, in which he eloquently and heroically defended his doctrines before the whole synod of prelates and abbots, he was condemned to expiate his heresy at the stake, and meantime was committed to the Tower for safe custody. In the words of the record, he was "sweetly and modestly condemned to be burnt alive on the 10th of October." But Henry still was not prepared to acquiesce in so desperate a doom on one who had spent with him so many mirthful days. He granted the reformer a respite of fifty days; and before that time had expired, lord Cobham had managed to escape from his prison, probably by the connivance of his lenient sovereign.

But once more at large, and in communication with his friends and confederates, Cobham became all the more active in his plans for the maintenance of the great cause. The church had now manifested its intentions; it had shown that it was not conversion, but destruction of the whole body of the reformers that it was resolved upon; and the question, therefore, with the persecuted sect naturally was, by what means it was to prevent the fate menacing it. If we are to believe the chroniclers of the times, the Lollards resolved to anticipate their enemies, to take up arms, and to repel force by force. That seeing clearly that war to the death was determined against them by the church, and that the king had yielded at least a tacit consent to this iniquitous policy, they came to the conclusion to kill not only the bishops, but the king and all his kin.

So atrocious a conspiracy is not readily to be credited against men who contended for a greater purity of gospel truth, nor against men of the practical and military knowledge of lord Cobham. But over the whole of these transactions there hangs a veil of impenetrable mystery, and we can only say that the Lollards are charged with endeavouring to surprise the king and his brother at Eltham, as they were keeping their Christmas festivities there, and that this attempt failed through the court receiving intimation of the design, and suddenly removing to Westminster; that, disappointed in this scheme, the Lollards were summoned from all quarters to march towards London, there to secure and kill all the principal clergy. They were, according to these accounts, to meet in St. Giles's fields, on the night of the 6th of January.

Room in the Lollards' Tower, Lambeth Palace, in which the Reformers were confined.

The king, it is stated, being warned of this movement, gave due notice to the city, and on the day previous to the proposed meeting, the mayor of London made various arrests of suspected persons, and amongst others of a squire of lord Cobham's, at the sign of the Ark, in Bishopgate Without. The aldermen were ordered to keep strict watch each in his own ward, and at midnight Henry himself issued forth with a strong force. He is represented as being greatly alarmed for the public safety, from the popular insurrections which had lately been raging in Paris, and to which

we shall presently have to draw attention. He ordered all the city gates to be closed, to keep the Lollards, who were within the walls, separate from those without; hastening then to the place of rendezvous.

Here again the narratives of this unaccountable affair contradict each other. One represents all the roads as being covered with the adherents of lord Cobham, hastening to the appointed spot in St. Giles's fields. That on asking the first overtaken who they were for, they replied by the preconcerted watchword—"For Sir John Oldcastle," and that these being seized, the rest took the alarm and fled. By other accounts there were expected to be twenty-five thousand men collected in the same fields, but only four score were found there. That some of these confessed that they came there to meet lord Cobham, but that the greater part knew nothing of any such meeting, but appeared to have been there by mere accident.

As for lord Cobham himself, the reputed originator of this great rising, the enthusiastic advocate of Lollardism, and the practical military man, he was nowhere to be seen or heard of. Had he got wind of the king's intended visit? If so, why had he not taken prompt means to warn his followers? If he had not heard of it, where was he? Why was he not there? The whole affair bears so wild, so misty and inconsistent an aspect, that the most probable solution of it is, that the bishops, disappointed of their prey by lord Cobham's escape, concerted this plan, and probably themselves disseminated the summonses to the meeting, in order to collect there some runaway followers of the fugitive leader, who under torture might disclose some knowledge of his retreat. If so, they failed in their main object; but they succeeded in alarming the king and the country, and giving a considerable check to Lollardism.

Henry, surprised at the non-appearance of the confidently predicted host of armed heretics, sent out detachments of his troops in all directions, and these picked up about seventy poor creatures who were tried as Lollards. Little reliance can be placed on the compulsory confessions of these prisoners. Amongst them was a silly fanatic, one William Murle, a rich brewer and maltster of Dunstable who was said to be taken with others at Harengay park, who had two led horses with him, trapped with gold, and a pair of gilt spurs in his bosom, expecting to be knighted by lord Cobham in the field.

About thirty of these captives were executed on the spot of their reputed rendezvous, St. Giles's Fields, being drawn and hanged as traitors, and then burnt; amongst them Sir Thomas Acton, whose body, instead of being burnt, was buried under the gallows.

In the whole of these strange transactions there is not the slightest evidence of the presence or complicity of lord Cobham; but the anxious object of the clergy is manifested in the proclamation which was issued on the ninth of January, offering a thousand marks for the apprehension of Sir John Oldcastle, lord Cobham. Sir John was nowhere to be found, for not a man would betray him; but the House of Commons had fully imbibed the intended alarm, and in their address to the king, they declared their conviction that the insurgents sought "to destroy the Christian faith, the king, the spiritual and temporal estates, and all manner of policy and law." The king would seem fully to have arrived at the same fearful conclusion; for in his proclamation he states that they meant "to destroy him, his brothers, and several of the spiritual and temporal lords, to confiscate the possessions of the church, to secularise the religious orders, to divide the realm into confederate districts, and to appoint Sir John Oldcastle president of the commonwealth."

The singularity of this charge, and its real nature as a plea of the hierarchy which had thus early raised the cry of "the church in danger," in order to crush the new church which was arising out of its own corruptions and neglects, is shown most luminously by the fact that the very parliament which joined in the cry, and was lending itself to the suppression of the Lollards, at this very time was itself vehemently bent on the very object which they thus made criminal in the Protestant body. We find in Hall, folio 35, that on the king demanding supplies, they renewed the offer which they had made to his father to seize all the ecclesiastical revenues, and convert them to the use of the crown.

The clergy were greatly alarmed by this demonstration from their own coadjutors, and feeling that the age was ripe for compelling them to disgorge a good portion of their enormous wealth, they agreed to confer upon Henry all the alien priories which depended on capital abbeys in Normandy, and had been bequeathed to those abbeys when that province continued united to England. The great originator of church persecution in this country, the man who first planted the stake and lit the flame around the bodies of his fellow-men for Christ's sake—a deed prolific of centuries of crime and horror, of civil dissension, and disgrace to the Christian name—was now gone to his account, and his successor Chicheley, as determined a persecutor as himself, endeavoured to turn the attention of the king by recommending him to carry war into France.

Henry was himself already meditating that very step. It was the dying advice of his father not to permit his subjects to remain long in inaction; which, in an age which possessed few resources but hunting or war to sufficiently occupy the minds of the great barons, was sure to breed domestic factions, while successful war kept them about the person of their prince, and attached them to him by every motive of honour and advantage. The state of France at that epoch was such as rendered a fresh attempt to conquer it most alluring, and even to suggest the idea to a monarch like Henry, chivalrous and ambitious of glory, that he was, in a manner, called by God to the salutary work of rescuing a great nation from its own suicidal frenzy, and punishing the iniquity of its people—which was actually monstrous—as the Israelites were led up to punish the corrupt inhabitants of Canaan. Having, therefore, consented to the desires of the church, and of that unique parliament which, while it recommended the stripping of the church, was deadly in its resentment against any other body attempting the same thing—that all judges and magistrates should arrest any persons suspected even of Lollardism, and deliver them over to the tender mercies of the ecclesiastical courts, and that these unfortunate schismatics should, on conviction, forfeit all their lands, goods, and chattels, as in cases of felony—he addressed himself to his great enterprise, the conquest of France.

That unfortunate country was in the most deplorable condition. The dissension, the unbounded dissoluteness, and the mutual murder of the princes, seemed to have utterly debauched and demoralised the people. From

head to foot the whole body, political and social, was diseased. Every principle of honour or of rectitude, every feeling of conscience or of pity appeared extinct. Cruelty, rapacity, crime, and lawlessness were become the grand features of the nation. It was high time that some power should interpose to scourge that debased generation and restore some sense of patriotism and virtue through a bitter régime if possible; and that was, in truth, the only title which Henry had to interfere. Bad as had been the claims set up by the Edwards, his was far worse; for he was the son of the usurper even in his own country, and if any just right to the crown of France could be established by the English Plantagenets, it resided in the earl of Marche, and not at all in him. But, while Henry in a most amusingly confident manner still talked of his hereditary title to the French throne, he did not omit to add what really appeared more obvious, that he was the appointed instrument of Providence to chastise the flagrant iniquity of the rulers of France.

That reconciliation of the duke of Orleans to Burgundy, the murderer of his father, which we have recorded, did not last three months. After the retirement of the duke of Clarence to Guienne, this feud broke out with fresh fury. The count of Armagnac, the father-in-law of Orleans, one of the most clear-sighted men amongst them, indeed, never laid down his arms. Burgundy continued in Paris, and there he got up a popular faction which gradually drew the whole city into scenes and outrages which remind us of the Parisian revolutions of our own times. He made a league with the butchers, who came out with ferocious alacrity, glad of such a sanction to play a conspicuous part on that great theatre of national confusion. They adopted a white hood as their badge; and, being in alliance with the duke of Burgundy, they also opened a communication with his revolutionary subjects in Flanders. The men of Ghent and Bruges had lost none of their taste for insurrection, and entered with delight into the scheme of revolutionising France under cover of the leadership of their own ruler. The white hood was distributed freely in those towns, and sent by delegates all over France. As the faction grew it proceeded to show its authority; and very soon the dukes of Burgundy and Berri, the dauphin, the king himself found themselves compelled to don the white hood, and show themselves as members of the honourable fraternity of political butchers. The judges, the barristers, the members of parliament, the noblesse, the professors and students of the university, the clergy, the monks, every class of the community, in short, were obliged to wear the white hood, as the only livery of patriotism. A reign of terror now commenced; the whole of the populace were ranged under the white hood, and had acquired the name of Cabochiens from one of their most ferocious leaders. They had reduced the upper classes of all descriptions to an ostensible submission to their despotism, and they now began to perpetrate every species of disorder. They seized on all such of the citizens as had wealth enough to yield a heavy ransom, and, if they refused to pay freely, they threw them into prison and detained them there till their resistance gave way. Their cry through all this was for the good of *la belle France*. They broke into the palace, and, besides plundering it, they carried away in triumph the duke of Bavaria, the brother of the infamous queen Isabella. They mounted the ladies of the court, two by two, on horseback, and bore them in triumph to the prison of the Louvre. Nor did they content themselves with plunder, and with these fantastic escapades; blood was literally mingled with their wine, and amongst their victims was the Sire de la Rivière, one of the most learned men of France, of an ancient and most honourable family.

To make confusion worse confounded, the dissolute and heartless Louis, the dauphin, quarrelled with the duke of Burgundy, and fomented intrigues and parties against him. Chief was arrayed against chief, and mob against mob. The respectable portion of the citizens, long made dumb with terror, took heart as the host of their plebeian tyrants began to direct their terrible energies against each other, and sent secretly to the Armagnacs. From being stout Burgundians thousands now declared openly for Orleans and his father-in-law; and when the duke of Berri endeavoured to force on the city a heavy tax, to carry on the war against the Armagnacs, they rebelled resolutely. In vain were the master butchers employed to levy the hateful impost; their rude compulsion only drove the burghers more rapidly into the arms of the opposite faction.

The professors of the university had risen into consideration in consequence of the divisions in the church; which were quite as unhappy as those of the state, no less than three different popes now claiming the chair of infallibility and the allegiance of the religious world. The clergy, by their violent animosities in contending with each other for this or that pontiff, had lost greatly the confidence of the people, who now in Paris turned to the men of learning. The professors were equally engaged in discussing the pretensions of the rival popes; but they displayed so much more erudition and ability in their party warfare, that they rose in public estimation, while the regular clergy declined. To them the factions continually referred their own disputes. No sooner did they feel their influence than they began to exert it against the butchers. They had seen with indignation their monarch, their princes, their princesses, and high-born ladies continually captives in the hands of these brutal men. They saw their favourite ministers butchered or cast into dungeons, and a most hateful and bloody despotism treading down everybody who dared to oppose them, or who refused to submit to their insolent demands.

But the professors might have preached and harangued in vain if they had not unexpectedly raised up an unlooked-for alliance. The butchers had beheaded the provost of Paris on the 1st of July, 1413, and this put the finish to their horrible domination. The carpenters determined to take the field against them, and, adopting the white scarf of the Orleans party, they came forth in all their strength. The conflict of white scarfs and white hoods became furious; but the carpenters prevailed. The butchers mustered in formidable force in the Place de Grêve, so memorable for its horrors on a more recent day; but, after a vigorous fight, they were vanquished, and were eventually driven out of Paris. The duke of Burgundy was soon compelled to follow his butcher faction, and in August, after making an abortive attempt to carry off the king, he retired to Flanders. The duke of Orleans entered the city with the Armagnacs; the white hoods vanished, and the white scarfs became the universal wear. Everything, except disorder, was changed. The ministers and magistrates were removed, and replaced by others of the party

in the ascendant. Those who had imprisoned and persecuted, now had the same, or a severer measure meted out to themselves. The faction of the dauphin was there struggling with that of the Armagnacs, and that of the queen against her own son. Louis, who had been amongst the first to call in the Armagnacs, now as earnestly implored the return of the duke of Burgundy.

Early in 1414 Burgundy accordingly marched to Paris with a large army, expecting to find the gates opened to him by the dauphin; but, on the contrary, it was stoutly defended by Orleans and the count of Armagnac, who threatened to hang up any one on the spot who showed the least disposition to favour Burgundy. The duke was compelled to retreat again into Flanders, and leave the Armagnacs in complete superiority. They had the king in their hands, and they compelled him to sign anything they pleased. The duke of Burgundy was declared by royal proclamation guilty of "the damnable murder of the late duke of Orleans," as well as of sundry other high crimes and treasons, and condemned to the forfeiture of all his territories.

The Armagnacs, having issued this proclamation, marched out of Paris, seized the duke's city of Compiègne, and laid siege to Soissons. This town was defended by the brave count de Bournonville, and at this siege the archers of England were found fighting against their fellow-subjects, the archers of Guienne. But the English very soon opened the gates to their countrymen from Bordeaux; the Armagnacs rushed in, and perpetrated one of the most frightful massacres in history. The rabble of Armagnacs appeared possessed with a demoniac frenzy, which sought the destruction of everything. Men, women, and children were massacred without mercy or discrimination. They pillaged the churches and monasteries; tore down the sacred ornaments of the altars; trod under foot the consecrated wafer; scattered the relics of saints, and demolished or defaced the images. The king was in their hands a complete puppet, and they made him the scapegoat of all their crimes. In his name the head of the brave governor, de Bournonville, was struck off, as well as those of a number of the principal officers and citizens; and, notwithstanding the English had admitted them, they

French Carpenter and Maid-Servant (Fifteenth Century).

THE BATTLE OF THE CARPENTERS AND BUTCHERS. (See page 521.)

hanged two hundred of their archers from the walls. Others of the distinguished inhabitants were sent under guard to Paris, where they met with the same fate.

From the butchery of Soissons this fanatic army marched to Arras, into which Burgundy had managed to retire; but they were there successfully resisted. While meditating to raise the siege, the alarming news arrived of the king of England's preparations for the invasion of France. A hollow truce was patched up between the contending parties; but, before the Armagnacs withdrew from the city, the house in which the king lodged was found to be on fire (probably from design by some of the desperadoes of one or other faction), and he escaped with difficulty.

Once more Paris became the rendezvous of the various chiefs of these revolting factions; where, in the autumn, the infamous dauphin originated a conspiracy to drive both Burgundians and Armagnacs from the capital, secure the person of the king, and make himself dictator. The scheme failed; and Louis was himself obliged to flee to Bourges. The Armagnacs once more rose on his retreat, fell on the Burgundians with great fury, and expelled their wives and children from the city.

Again in April of the following year, 1415, the dauphin regained possession of Paris by a base stratagem. He invited his mother, queen Isabella, the dukes of Orleans and Berri, with the other princes of the blood, to meet at Melun, in order to settle all differences and unite with one accord against the English invader. The queen and princes fell into the snare. They set out for Melun, and the dauphin simultaneously hastened into the capital, closed the gates against them, and ordered them, with the exception of Berri, severally to retire to their estates. One great object of Louis was to secure the rich hoards of his mother, which she had deposited in the church of St. Denis. Once possessed of them, he charged his mother, Orleans, Burgundy, and the rest of the princes of the blood—for Louis was a perfect Ishmaelite in hisenmities—with being the authors of all the calamities which had fallen on France. The declaration would have been true enough had he included his own share in them. But he now promised to redress everything; and, as an earnest of his intentions, he proceeded to perpetrate still worse extravagances, follies, and wrongs. He levied on all sides the most arbitrary exactions, which he spent surrounded by troops of insolent and insatiable courtiers. His court became still more disgracefully licentious than any before it. He shut up his wife, the daughter of the duke of Burgundy, in the château of St. Germain-en-Laye, and placed at the head of his court a servant of the palace as his mistress. The duke of Burgundy, enraged at the treatment of his daughter, vowed vengeance against the profligate dauphin, and prepared to march against him, accompanied by his butcher chiefs, Caboche, Legoix, and others of the white-hood clan. Meantime Armagnac was ravaging the south of France, and St. Pol the north. Never was a country so torn by faction and desolated and degraded by crime; and it was at this moment that Henry of England prepared to descend on the devoted land, announcing himself as the scourge of a justly incensed Providence.

In little more than twelve months after mounting the throne, Henry forwarded to France, in July, 1414, his demand of the crown of that country. No answer was returned. He then reduced his requisition from the whole realm to the following modest one: namely, the provinces of Normandy, Maine, and Anjou; the territories which formerly composed the duchy of Aquitaine; and the several towns and counties included in the treaty of Bretigni; that Charles VI. should put him in possession of half of Provence, the inheritance of Eleanor and Sanchia, the queens of Henry III. and of his brother Richard, and two of the four daughters of Beranger, once sovereign of that country. That he should pay up the arrears of king John's ransom, one million two hundred thousand crowns, and give Henry his daughter Catherine, with two million crowns more.

To this astounding demand the French government replied that the king was willing to give the hand of his daughter, with six hundred thousand crowns, a higher sum than had ever been paid with any princess of France, and all the territories anciently included in the duchy of Aquitaine.

Parliament of Henry V.—From the Harleian MSS. in the British Museum.

To this Henry refused to consent, but summoned a parliament, the speaker of which was Thomas Chaucer, the son of the great poet, and received from it the unwontedly liberal supply of two tenths and two fifteenths. To give an air of moderation to his demands, however, Henry still pretended to negotiate. He sent overto Paris a splendid embassy, consisting of six hundred horsemen, headed by the earl of Dorset and the bishops of Durham and Norwich. They entered the capital with so much parade and magnificence, that the French vanity was surprised and mortified by it. The ambassadors first proposed a continuation of the truce for four months. They repeated the terms of the former embassy as to peace and the matrimonial alliance of the two countries, but consented to accept the princess with half the original sum. On the other side the French raised the amount proffered from six to eight hundred thousand crowns. Here the matter ended, and the embassy returned.

This was, no doubt, precisely what Henry expected; and now he made preparations for an immediate invasion. On the 16th of April he summoned at Westminster a council of fifteen spiritual and twenty-eight temporal peers, when

he announced his resolve "to recover his inheritance by arms." His speech was received with the utmost applause and enthusiasm. The great barons and knights, eager to obtain military fame, engaged to furnish their quotas of troops to the utmost of their ability; parliament granted two tenths and fifteenths, and dissolved and made over to the king no less than a hundred alien priories, not conventual. Henry himself exerted every means of increasing his resources. He raised loans by pawning his crown jewels, the magnificent crown itself of Henry IV., and by other means, and altogether amassed the sum of five hundred thousand nobles in ready money. He rifled the cupboards and buffets of the royal palaces, and gave them as pledges of the ultimate payment of their prices to great creditors.

The Duke of Bedford, Henry's brother, was appointed regent of the kingdom during the royal absence; and the youthful monarch, full of aspirations of glory and conquest, set forward towards Southampton, the port of embarkation.

Meantime, the French princes, engrossed by their own dissensions, had made no exertions to prepare the kingdom for such a formidable attack. They fondly hoped that Henry would close with the liberal terms offered him, and were, therefore, thunderstruck with the present promptitude of his motions. They hastily sent over the duke of Vendôme and the archbishop of Bourges to repeat the last advanced terms offered through the duke of Berri. They met Henry at Winchester, but he would listen to nothing but the most complete surrender of all the rights that England ever possessed in France. There was now no going back; the time for mere diplomatic talk was over with Henry. He declared that the crown of France was his right, and that he would wrest it from its usurper by the sword. The archbishop of Bourges, who seems to have been a man of spirit, on this assumed a bold demeanor, and declared that the king of France had made all possible concession, not out of any fear, but from sincere desire of peace. That if the king imagined he could easily overcome France he deceived himself. That its throne was the firmest in Europe. "If," said he, "thou makest thy attempt, our sovereign lord will call upon the blessed Virgin, and upon all the saints, and by their aid thou wilt be driven into the sea by the king, his faithful subjects, and powerful allies; or thou wilt be slain, or taken captive."

To this lofty language Henry only, smiling, replied, "We shall see." He appeared no way to resent the freedom of the spirited prelate, but gave him his passports at his request, and dismissed him and his attendants with valuable presents.

Proceeding to Southampton, Henry actively superintended the preparations for the embarkation of his army, which lay encamped along the shore in magnificent array. While he was thus engaged he once more sent off a messenger to the king of France, as if it were necessary to announce formally his coming. This time it was Antelope, his pursuivant-at-arms, who was instructed to demand all the provinces of England and the hand of Catherine, or to deliver the king's defiance. It was at this time, when the old king made a mild but firm reply, that the wild and profligate Louis, the dauphin, sent his gasconading message, accompanied by a parcel of tennis-balls, telling Henry that they much better befitted him, by all accounts of his past life, than cannon-balls; on hearing which, Henry is said to have been stung with momentary anger, and replied, "These balls shall be struck back with such a racket as shall force open Paris gates."

Some historians have treated this incident as apocryphal and improbable; but no fact is better authenticated by almost every chronicler of the time, and nothing is more accordant with the character of prince Louis.

But in the very midst of Henry's active occupation of embarking his troops, danger was much nearer to him than from the tennis-balls or bravadoes of the giddy dauphin. A conspiracy to assassinate him was discovered at the very moment that it was intended to carry it into execution; and what is singular, the discovery came from the very person for whose especial benefit the movement was intended.

The young earl of Marche, as we have already had occasion to state, was not only the true heir to the throne, but had been brought up with Henry, and was really attached to him. The sister of the young earl was married to Richard, earl of Cambridge, and brother to the duke of York. Cambridge, by his alliance with the true prince, appears to have been infected with the ambitious desire of seeing himself not merely brother to a legitimate prince who was contented in his station, which, though that of a subject, was honourable and happy, but brother to a king. From the little light thrown by cotemporary historians on the progress of the plot, we can only perceive that Cambridge had sought the co-operation of several persons who were known to have acted or suffered in the opposition to the late king. These were Sir Thomas Grey, of Heton, in Northumberland, and lord Scrope, of Masham, both of whom had been involved in the Percy insurrections themselves, or by their near relatives. Scrope was at this time high in the favour of his sovereign. He was his trusted chamberlain, and one of the most confidential of his privy council. In the chase and in his social hours, he was the especial companion of Henry. Yet he appears to have given in to this base conspiracy, and Henry was to be assassinated before embarking, after which, the conspirators were to escape to Wales with the earl of Marche, and there raise the banner of revolt in his behalf.

It would seem that the conspiracy was as ill-constructed as it was wicked. The conspirators do not appear to have obtained the decided sanction of the principal person concerned. Probably Cambridge might have speculated on private conversations with his brother-in-law, the earl of Marche, and have persuaded himself that he would fall in with such a scheme when it appeared to him feasible. But when, at the moment of action, Marche was apprised of the intended blow, he refused, by the earnest advice of his man Lacy, to swear to keep the secret, but required an hour in which to consider of the proposal. However the persuasions of Cambridge or his own secret feelings might have inclined him at any previous moment, now, when his friend and noble patron Henry was menaced with instant death, Marche at once decided, and hastened to apprise the king of his danger. That Marche had listened to the voice of the tempter is plain from his first requesting a pardon from Henry for giving ear "to his rebels and traitors sufficiently to understand their schemes."

This pardon Henry at once accorded, but he seized the

conspirators, and brought them immediately before a council, where their fate was to be decided by twelve jurors of the county. Grey pleaded guilty to the charge of having conspired to kill the king, "to proclaim the earl of Marche, in case Richard II. was really dead," to having by their emissaries solicited the said Richard, or, as he was by the indictment declared to be, Thomas of Tumpington, who personated that monarch, to invade the king's dominions with a body of Scottish forces and Scottish lords.

Cambridge and Scrope demanded to be tried by their peers, whereupon all the lords of the army were summoned; the duke of Clarence was appointed to preside in place of the king, and the duke of York, that he might not sit in judgment on his own brother, nominated the earl of Dorset his proxy.

Cambridge made an earnest appeal to the king for mercy, and Scrope pleaded, like Marche, that he had only listened in order to ascertain the objects of the conspirators, so that he might effectually defeat them. The plea did not avail him any more than the cowardly prayer of Cambridge. They were all three condemned, were led out to the north gate of the town, and had their heads struck off, just as the royal fleet, with a favourable wind, hoisted sail, and bore out of the harbour of Southampton, on the 13th of August, 1415.

This memorable expedition, thus painfully inaugurated by the blood of treason in the very near kindred of the king, consisted of six thousand men-at-arms, and twenty-four thousand archers, which so many occasions had now demonstrated to be the real power of England. These troops were carried in a fleet of fifteen hundred sail; and, with an auspicious wind, entered the mouth of the Seine on the second day, August 18th. Three days were consumed in landing the troops and stores, and it does not appear that there was any opposition from the enemy.

Henry at once laid siege to the strong fortress of Harfleur, situated on the left bank of the river, and defended by a numerous garrison, under the command of the counts d'Estouteville, de Guitri, and de Gaucourt, as well as others of the French nobility. The siege was conducted according to the principles of the greatest master of engineering of the time, Master Giles, the splendid manuscript of whose work, "De Regimine Principum," is yet preserved in the Harleian Collection in the British Museum.

The French knights of the garrison displayed the utmost bravery, and made repeated assaults on the troops of Henry while throwing up their entrenchments, but they were received in such a manner by the archers that they were soon very glad to keep within the shelter of their walls. These walls themselves were in bad repair; the succours which had been promised by the government did not arrive; the English cannon was fast demolishing the outworks, and sappers undermining the towers. A worse enemy than even the English was also amongst them—the dysentery, owing to the dampness of the place, and the unhealthy quality of the provisions; and the garrison surrendered on the 22nd of September, after a defence of thirty-six days.

Henry seated himself on his throne, placed beneath a magnificent tent, on the summit of a hill opposite to the town, where he received the submission of the garrison. On each side of the throne stood the English nobles; Sir Robert Umphraville on the king's right hand bearing the royal helmet, surmounted by the crown, on the point of a lance. De Gaucourt, the governor of Harfleur, attended by thirty-four burgesses, approached; and kneeling, presented the keys of the town and prayed the king's mercy.

Henry's conduct on this occasion was opposed to his usual humanity, and seemed dictated not by the generous policy which immediately afterwards followed, but by the stern and less effective principles which guided Edward III. at Calais. He fixed his banner and that of St. George over the principal gate, and then gave permission for the men-at-arms to retire, having deposited their arms, stripped to their doublets, on condition that they swore to take no farther part in this campaign, but to surrender themselves within a certain time as prisoners to the governor of Calais.

So far, all was lenient and humane; but then, after walking barefoot to church, to return thanks for his victory, he commanded all the inhabitants, men, women, and children, to quit their homes for ever; to relinquish all their property to the conquerors, except a portion of their clothes, and five pennies each to procure provisions on their way. All their wealth, the arms and horses of the garrison, were to become the spoil of the English host, and to be equally distributed amongst them according to the terms of their service. These terms themselves were extraordinary, for the feudal system was so far worn out that Henry was obliged to make contracts with different lords and gentlemen, who engaged to serve him a year from the first day of muster. The wages paid on this occasion were:—to a duke, 13s. 4d. per day; to an earl, 6s. 8d.; a baron, or banneret, 4s.; a knight, 2s.; an esquire, 1s.; and an archer, 6d. If we estimate these sums at their present value, that is, fifteen times increased, we shall see how infinitely better paid were the common soldiers of Henry V. than those of Victoria I. The pay of a duke would be £10 a day; of an earl, £5; a baron, £3; a knight, 30s.; an esquire, 15s.; and of an archer, 7s. 6d. Dukes, earls, and commanders in general take good care of themselves now-a-days; but the common soldiers would be astonished at receiving 7s. 6d. per day.

Besides this the men were to receive the ransom money of all prisoners that they made, and two-thirds of the booty. This undoubtedly arose from the fact being now clearly demonstrated that the archers were the real strength of the army, and the source of all the English victories.

But notwithstanding the lavish terms on which the army had been engaged, the siege of Harfleur was dearly purchased by it. The weather was extremely hot, and the place, lying low on the banks of the Seine, was at that season extremely unhealthy. A dysentery, partly from those causes, and partly from the incautious eating of unripe fruit, and the putrid exhalations from the offal of animals killed for the camp, broke out, and raged amongst the soldiers far more mortally than the awkward artillery of that age. About two thousand of the troops had perished, besides great numbers who were disabled by sickness. Several officers of rank died, and when Henry had shipped off his sick for England, including the Duke of Clarence, the earls of Marche, Arundel, Marshall, and many other great officers, his army was reduced to about one-half of its original number.

A council of war, which Henry had called before shipping off his invalids, had come to the decision of returning wholly to England, and making preparations for the next year; but to this Henry would not listen for a moment.

To embark altogether, he said, would look like fear, and convert their conquest into a flight. He was resolved, he added, to march to Calais, and dare every peril, rather than the French should say that he was afraid of them. France was his own, he contended, and he would see a little more of it before quitting it. He trusted in God that they should take their way without harm or danger, but if compelled to fight, glory and victory would be theirs, as it had been always that of his ancestors in that country. He declared his route to be Normandy, Picardy, and Artois to Calais.

Having taken this resolution, nothing could turn him from it, though he had only nine hundred lances and five thousand archers, barely six thousand men in all; while a French army of one hundred thousand men was already on foot to intercept his march. Before setting out he repaired the fortifications of Harfleur, and placed it under the command of his uncle, the earl of Dorset, as governor, and Sir John Fastolf, as lieutenant-governor, with a garrison of two thousand men, which were independent of the six thousand men he intended to take with him. He invited over many English families to settle in Harfleur, and make it a second Calais, granting them the houses and premises of the former inhabitants.

Having made these arrangements, on the eighth of October he set forward on his most daring march. He disposed his little host in three divisions, attended by two detachments, which served as van and rear guards on the march, ready to be converted in the field into wings for protecting his flanks. Never was a more hardy enterprise undertaken. It might, according to all ordinary principles, be termed fool-hardy. But all the victorious expeditions of the Edwards I. and III. had been of the same character, and had they failed, would have been recorded in history as unexampled instances of rashness and folly: so much depends on the result rather than the antecedents of an action.

At every step the little army of England was watched by overwhelming forces. The constable of France, count D'Albret, lay directly in their way in Picardy with fourteen thousand men-at-arms and forty thousand foot, and laid waste the whole country before them. At Rouen the king and dauphin lay with another large army, and fresh troops were hastening from all quarters towards his line of march. The French host mustered in his track already upwards of one hundred thousand; some writers say one hundred and forty thousand men. Henry had to traverse a long tract of country infested with these exasperated enemies. His troops were in want of provisions, lodgings, guides, which their enemy took care to deprive them of. They had, in fact, to march through a desert, defended by strong towns, intersected by deep rivers, and were exposed every moment to have their scouts, foragers, and stragglers cut off, while the foe took care to avoid a general engagement.

The army was sometimes whole days without food. The wretched people were themselves starving, from the devastations purposely made by their own countrymen, and sickness began to decimate the British troops from their excessive fatigues and want of necessary food. At the passage of the river Bresle, the garrison of Eu made a furious sortie, and fell upon the rear of the army with loud shouts and amazing impetuosity, but, spite of the exhausted condition of the soldiers, they received the attack with coolness, slew the French commander, and drove back the garrison to its fortress.

In four days, that is, on the 12th of October, Henry had arrived at the ford of Blanche-taque, where his grandfather, Edward III., had passed the Somme. He had intended to do the same, but the French, taught by their former failure, had taken care to make this ford impassable by driving strong stakes into the bottom, and D'Albret appeared on the right bank with a numerous force. Disappointed in this expectation, he retreated to the little town of Airennes, where Edward III. had slept two nights before the battle of Creçy. He then advanced up the river, searching for a ford or bridge, as Edward had sought down it. He avoided Abbeville, where D'Albret lay with his main army, and marched to Bailleul, where he slept on the 13th.

Still advancing upwards, he found every bridge broken, every ford secured, and D'Albret and his forces marching along the right bank in exact time with him, ready to repel any attempt at crossing the river.

Seeing this, many of his soldiers, already enervated with fatigue and sickness, began to lose heart. They beheld themselves with alarm advancing further and further from the sea, and knew that tremendous bodies of troops were in both front and rear—"I who write," says a chaplain of the army, whose manuscript recital was first discovered by Sir Harris Nicolas in the Cottonian collection, "and many others looked bitterly up to heaven, and implored the divine mercy, and the protection of the Virgin, to save us from the imminent perils by which we were surrounded, and enable us to reach Calais in safety."

The next day Henry attempted to force a passage at Port St. Remy, but without success, as Edward III. had done before him. On the 15th, the following day, he made another endeavour to cross at Ponteau de Mer, but was again foiled. Still going on he tried other passages on the 16th and 17th, but without avail. Everywhere appeared the most hopeless obstacles. Taking advantage of the winding of the river, Henry now dashed across the country from the neighbourhood of Corbie to Boves, and thence marched on Nefles. On the way he made a halt in a valley, and ordered his archers to provide themselves each with a stake of six feet long, and to sharpen it at each end. He then pushed forward again to outmarch the constable, who was obliged to follow a more circuitous route by Peronne. He had sent, however, strict orders to guard all the fords of the river, but not being present to see this enforced, Henry at Nefles received information that the passage was still open between Voyenne and Bethencourt. On the 19th he came up to this place, and made a dash across it. Four bannerets led the way successfully; the rest of the army and the baggage followed rapidly in their track; and in twelve hours the English had arrived safely on the right bank. Henry marched on to Monchy la Gauche; while the constable, instead of daring to attack him, fell back on Bapaume, and thence on St. Pol.

It is remarkable that during all this march up the river from the 13th to the 20th, a full week, the swarming French armies in his rear had not dared to fall upon him in his trouble and perplexity. As in the former case of Edward III., they felt that they had a lion in pursuit, and dreaded that he should turn and stand at bay. In any other case but that of an English army in a mood of desperation, they

were enough to have annihilated the whole force at any moment.

While D'Albret had been guarding the passages of the Somme, the French princes, instead of attacking Henry, had held a council of war at Rouen in presence of the king. Here they had resolved to give battle to the English by a majority of thirty-five to five, and they fixed the 25th as the important day of action. They sent three heralds to announce this resolve to the king of England.

Henry was at Monchy when the heralds arrived. They delivered their message on their knees, which was that the king of France and his nobles were prepared to meet him in the field on the following Friday. Henry replied, with apparent indifference, "The will of God be done." The heralds then inquired by what way he meant to march, so that they might meet with him. He replied, "By that which leads straight to Calais; and if my enemies attempt to intercept me it will be at their peril. I shall not seek them, and I will not move a step quicker or slower to avoid them. I could, however, have wished that they had adopted other counsels, instead of attempting to shed the blood of Christians."

This was singular language for a man to hold who was notoriously in a foreign country with a hostile force, come avowedly to subdue it by his arms, and, therefore, necessarily himself intending to shed the blood of Christians; but the true meaning is, that Henry, at Harfleur, had sent a challenge to the dauphin, offering to decide the question of the crown of France by single combat; and this speech was an announcement that he was still ready to put his claims on this personal hazard.

Some writers have asserted that Henry, on this occasion, imitated the offered concession of the Black Prince, when in precisely the same predicament before the battle of Poictiers, and expressed his willingness to surrender his conquest of Harfleur for a free passage to Calais. But nothing could be farther from his language and bearing. His tone and demeanor were those of a conscious hero, who knew his strength, and took no thought for any disproportion of numbers. The heralds, instead of finding the king in any degree alarmed or dispirited, appear to have been greatly awed by his commanding coolness; and, receiving a present of one hundred crowns, returned with a profound impression of the martial character of the king.

The constable had placed himself in advance directly in Henry's route to Calais; but he followed leisurely on his track, as if no enemy were either before or behind him. Yet all this time fresh forces had been flocking in to the standard of the constable; and his army was now so overwhelming, that it began to be impatient to fall on the English, confident that they could surround and destroy them. But the experienced D'Albret remembered the days of Creçy and Poictiers, when the like confidence had produced the most complete destruction to the French armies from a mere handful of these iron Englishmen. He fell back from St. Pol to the villages of Ruisseauville and Azincourt before he consented to stand and await the English king. Henry, on his part, leaving Peronne to the left, marched through Encre and Lucheu to Blangy, where there was a bridge over the deep and rapid stream of the Ternois, which the French had neglected to destroy. At his approach they appeared disposed to demolish it, but drew off, and he passed over without interruption. The duke of York rode on and saw that the constable's forces were marching towards the village of Azincourt. Henry reconnoitred them from an eminence, and, believing that they intended to give him battle, he ordered his troops to form and receive them. They stood prepared till it was dark; but no enemy appearing, they advanced along a road which led them to the village of Maisoncelles. There they halted at but a few bow-shots from the enemy's lines; but they procured plenty of provisions, and refreshed and rested themselves more than they had done during the whole march.

When the moon was up, Henry, with some of his most experienced officers, ascended the heights above the village of Maisoncelles, and beheld the whole French army drawn up in the plains of Azincourt, completely cutting off any further advance towards Calais. It was evident that the eve of a decisive battle had arrived. It was equally impossible to advance towards Calais or retreat towards Harfleur. In fact, to attempt in the slightest degree to retreat would be synonymous with destruction; for that would utterly dishearten his own men and bring the immense swarms of the enemy like a flock of hungry wolves upon them. Even if they could beat back such a host under such circumstances, they must soon perish by the way, for the whole region was a wilderness, destitute of food or shelter. The hour of action had arrived.

Henry was placed precisely in the same circumstances as Edward III. had been at Creçy, and the Black Prince at Poictiers. His army was reduced by the march, and many of his men were feeble with sickness. They had to contend with a force more than twelve times their own number; an enemy led on by all the princes of the blood, plentifully supplied with everything, and confident of success. But for all that they did not lose heart for a moment, and the king appeared amongst them with the same calm and heroic air which had inspired with such assurance the immortal archers of Creçy and Poictiers.

The resemblance between the situations, and the circumstances of the three great battles of those ages in France, of which this was last of the trio, is one of the most curious facts in history. The English monarchs had set out on a precisely similar wild march across an enemy's country, careless of being surrounded by infinitely superior numbers, fighting on their own soil for everything dear to them. They had been driven to the same extremity, and obliged to make a stand against odds such as no men but Englishmen would dream for a moment of opposing. Yet on every one of these occasions they had been enabled to select a position of surprising strength, and so much resembling each other that the parallel is marvellous. The same sloping ground, protected behind by woods, and flanked by the same: the approach, contracted by woods or a deep lane, so that the vast hosts were useless so long as they maintained that position.

Yet on the other side the French had the insuperable advantage, not only of immense numbers, but of obtaining at will all necessary supplies. The country was entirely open to them; their cause was the cause of the common people against an invader, and they had only to wait in order to starve out the intruder, or, if he attempted to cut his way through them, to avoid a general engagement; still, however, desolating the country before and around, and harassing the flanks and rear of the foe, lion-

AZINCOURT. KING HENRY V. AND THE SIRE DE HELLY. (See page 531.)

like in spirit and prowess, but necessarily sinking under famine and fatigue.

That the French should, in the confidence of their numbers, have overlooked these vast advantages, these certain means of victory, in the first instance, is by no wonderful; but after the terrible lesson of Creçy, and again of Poictiers, that they should have committed the same glaring blunder a third time, is an evidence of their lack of cool calculation at that time which never ceases to astonish us. The duke of Berri, now a very old man, who fought in the battle of Creçy fifty-nine years before, was one of the few individuals, at least amongst the commanders, who appeared to have a misgiving. He strenuously opposed any general engagement, and though he did not succeed in that important particular, he did in another nearly as important. He carried his point that the king should not command in person, as was proposed. "Better," he said, "it will be to lose the battle, than to lose the battle and the king too."

On the part of the French generally all such cautions were treated as dotage. There was nothing but the most absolute confidence of victory in their camp. They were full of jollity, and feasted gaily on abundance of provisions and wine. Already they were engaged in noisy declamations regarding the distribution of their prisoners and their booty, for they made themselves certain of securing the whole of the British army. They resolved to put all the English to the sword, except the king and his principal nobility, whom they proposed to spare for the sake of their ransoms.

There were numbers of young French princes and nobles, who, so far from calling to mind the fatal overthrows of Creçy and Poictiers, had not yet won their spurs, and these young aristocrats, were, as is generally the case with their class, full of vain confidence. The constable, a man of experience, surrounded by the headstrong folly and ignorant pride of these butterfly captains, could hardly be said to be more than commander-in-chief in name. In vain he urged that fresh forces were on their march under the duke of Brittany and the marshal de Loigny, which must arrive that very day or the next. "What need of more forces," they exclaimed; "we are already enough to sweep them from the earth."

The constable planted his banner on the Calais road, a little in advance of the village of Ruisseauville, and the dukes of Orleans and Bourbon, of Berri, Alençon, and Brabant, and all the great lords planted theirs round it with loud acclamations and rejoicings that the hour was come which was to give up to them their enemy and all his spoil. But the joy was soon damped, for the night set in dark and rainy. The ground was a clay which soon swam with water, and became so slippery that their horses slid and stumbled about in great disorder. The pages and valets rode to and fro seeking straw to lay on the muddy ground for their officers and themselves. There was a great bustling and moving to and fro; people shouting to one another, and making much noise, but obtaining very little comfort; and it was at length observed that their horses stood silent and did not neigh, which is looked upon on the eve of battle as a very bad omen. When they would have cheered themselves with music, very few instruments could be found. At length, however, they succeeded in lighting fires along their lines, and bursts of laughter and merriment were repeatedly heard by the English, while their enemies were, no doubt, calculating the value of their horses and the arms on their backs.

The English, on their part, passed a night of serious reflection. They had made a long march under great difficulties and privations. Many of them were wasted by sickness, worn down by fatigue and scanty and unwholesome fare. They were in the presence of an immense force. But they were descendants of the heroes of Creçy, which lay not far off, and they had the utmost confidence in the bravery of their leader. They spent the early part of the night in making their wills, and in devotion. The king visited every quarter of his little camp, and sent out, as soon as the moon gave light enough, officers to arrange the plan of battle the next day, and ordered bands of music to play through the whole night.

At break of day Henry summoned the men to attend matins and mass, and then leading them into the field, arranged them in his usual manner, in three divisions and two wings; but in such close array that the whole appeared but as one body. The archers, who were his grand strength, he posted in advance of the men-at-arms, four in file, in the form of a wedge. Besides their bows and arrows, the archers were now armed each with a battle-axe and a sword. The fatal field of Bannockburn, where the archers were rendered useless by their want of side arms, when Bruce rode his cavalry amongst them, seems to have taught the English this precaution. Every man, too, bore on his shoulder the stout stake, which Henry had ordered them to provide themselves with, pointed at each end, and tipped with iron. This they planted obliquely before them, as a chevaux de frise, and thus opposed a formidable rampart to the French cavalry. Such a defence had never been used before in any Christian army.

Determined to rival the fame of their predecessors in the most renowned fields, the bold archers of Nottingham, of York, of Lincoln, and of Kent stripped off their jerkins of buff, laid bare their brawny arms and their broad chests, to give free play to their action. Many even flung away cap and shoe, and, half naked, they are said to have presented so savage an appearance as struck awe into the enemy.

The fight on the English side being intended, as at Creçy and Poictiers, to be on foot, Henry had placed all his baggage, with the priests and the horses, in the rear, near the village of Maisoncelles, under the guard of a small body of archers and men-at-arms. He dismissed all his prisoners on their parole to appear at Calais if he won the victory. He then mounted a gray palfrey, and rode along the lines of each division. He wore a helmet of polished steel, surmounted by a crown sparkling with jewels, and on his surcoat were emblazoned the arms of England and France. He went from banner to banner addressing and encouraging the men. He recalled to their minds the glorious victories of Creçy and Poictiers; he told them that he was resolved to win as great a triumph or to die on the field; and he declared that every man who showed himself that day worthy of his country and his name, should henceforth be deemed a gentleman, and be entitled to wear coat-armour.

Still more to excite their spirits, he told them that the French had determined to cut off three fingers of their right hands in order to ruin them for ever for bowmen, and he bade them remember what they had done at the siege of Soissons,

where they had hanged two hundred brave bowmen like dogs. These observations inflamed their resentment wonderfully against the enemy, and Walter Hungerford, a gallant officer of their body, said, in Henry's hearing, "Would to God we had here with us in the field some more of the good knights and brave bowmen who are sitting idle in merry England!"

"No," replied Henry, "not a single man of them! If God gives us the victory, the fewer we are, the more honour. The fewer we are, if we lose, the less the loss to our country. But we will not lose. Fight with your usual courage, and God and the justice of our cause will protect us. Before night, the pride of our enemies shall be humbled in the dust, and the greater part of that multitude shall be stretched on the fields, or captives in our power."

So the king went on inspiring confidence by his words, but far more by the lively cheerfulness of his countenance, which, like that of Edward III. on the like occasion, seemed to presage nothing but victory and glory.

The French had drawn up their host in a manner similar to that of Henry, but instead of their files being four, they were thirty-nine deep. The constable himself commanded the first division; the dukes of Barre and Alençon the second; the earls of Marle and Falconberg the third. But in their eagerness to come at the English, they had crowded their troops into a narrow field between two woods, where they had no room to deploy, or scarcely to use their weapons, and the ground was so slippery with the rain, that their horses could with difficulty keep their legs; while the English archers, who were immediately opposed to them, were not only on foot, but many of them barefooted, and, disencumbered of their clothes, were ready to make their way alertly over the soft ground.

Both the French and English commanders had ordered their men to seat themselves on the ground with their weapons before them, and thus they continued to face each other without action for some time. The constable, most probably to gain time for the arrival of the expected reinforcements, still lay quiet, and Henry took the opportunity to distribute refreshments of food and wine through his ranks. He also seized the opportunity to send off secretly two detachments, one to lie in ambush in a woody meadow at Tramecourt, on their left flank, and the other to set fire to some houses in their rear as soon as they were engaged, to throw them into alarm.

Scarcely had the king executed this manœuvre, when he was surprised by a deputation of three French knights from D'Albret, the commander. They came to offer him a free passage to Calais, if he would agree to surrender Harfleur, and renounce his pretensions to the throne of France. Henry disdained to enter into any negotiations except on the very same terms that he had dictated before he left England; and, penetrating the real object of these overtures, that of gaining time, he impatiently dismissed the matter. But the envoys were not to be so readily despatched. One of them, the Sire de Helly, who had been a prisoner in England, and was accused of breaking his parole, introduced that matter, and offered to meet in single combat, between the two armies, any man who should dare to asperse his honour.

"Sir knight," said Henry, curtly, "this is no time for single combats. Go, tell your countrymen to prepare for battle, and doubt not that, for the violation of *your* word, *you* will a second time forfeit your liberty, if not your life."

"Sir," replied De Helly, insolently, determined to prolong the parley, "I shall receive no orders from you. Charles is our sovereign. Him we shall obey, and for him we shall fight against you whenever we think proper."

"Away then," said Henry, "and take care that we are not before you." And instantly stepping forward he cried, "Banners, advance!"

With that Sir Thomas Erpingham, a brave old warrior, threw his warder into the air, exclaiming, "Now strike!" and the English moved on in gallant style till they came within bowshot of the French lines. Then every man kneeling down kissed the ground, a custom which they had learned from the Flemish, who, at the great battle of Courtray, where they defeated the French cavalry with such brilliancy, had thus each taken up a particle of earth in his mouth, while the priest in front elevated the host. It was a sign of consecration to the great duty of the day; and having done this homage to the God of battles, they rose up with a tremendous shout, struck each man his pointed stake into the ground before him, and stepping in front of these stakes, sent a flight of arrows at their foes, and again retired behind them.

The constable, who well knew the terrible effect of the English archers on the French troops, had prepared a scheme similar to that of Bruce at Bannockburn to break their line, and throw them into confusion. He had few or no archers, for the French at that period adhered to the feudal notion that knights and gentlemen only must handle arms. The dreadful defeats of Crecy and Poictiers had not cured them of the foolish idea that arms must not be trusted to plebeian hands. He therefore had trained a body of twelve hundred men-at-arms under Messire Clignet, of Brabant, who were to make a desperate charge on the archers, and break up their ranks. They came on with fierce cries of "Mountjoye! St. Denis!" but the slipperiness of the ground, and the fierce flight of arrows which struck through their visors and their armour, threw them at once into confusion. Their horses reeled and stumbled against each other in the muddy clay, and to avoid the iron hail of arrows they turned their heads aside, and thus knew not how to guide their steeds. Of the whole twelve hundred not more than seven score ever reached the spiked barricade of the archers, from which the few remaining horses recoiled; and the whole troop in a few minutes lay dead or wounded on the ground. Only three horses are said to have penetrated within the line of stakes, and there they fell perforated with wounds. Meantime, hundreds of wounded steeds were dashing to and fro, and continually returning upon the French lines, stung to madness by their pain. All became confusion and disorder in the first division. The men-at-arms were so wedged together that they could not extricate themselves from the throng to advance or retreat. While the bravest strove to rush on the enemy, the timid endeavoured to fall back on the next division, and the most awful chaos arose.

Still the English archers poured in their arrows, dropping multitudes at each discharge; and when their arrows failed they seized their battle-axes, and, leaving their stakes, rushed on with fierce cries. At this signal the men in ambush replied with similar shouts, and, falling on the flank of the French army, added immensely to the terror and

disorder. While they showered their arrows in that direction, the archers in front hewed their way with their hatchets through all opposition. They dashed amid the steel-clad horsemen, burst through the whole array of horses and armour, slew the commander-in-chief and many of his most illustrious officers, and in a very short time, without any aid whatever from the men-at-arms, dispersed the whole of the first division.

The second division opened to receive the fugitives, which occasioned fresh disorder; and at this crisis the duke of Brabant, who had hastened on before his expected reinforcements, galloped up with a fresh body of horse, and charged the advancing archers. Those indomitable men, however, speedily cut him down, destroyed his detachment, and kept on their way, laying prostrate all before them. They soon arrived at the second division, who, though wallowing up to their horses' girths in the middle of a ploughed field, the men on foot being sunk by the weight of their armour almost up to the knees, yet kept their ground. At this moment Henry advanced with his men-at-arms; but, seeing the nature of the ground, he rallied his brave bowmen, who, having no weight to carry, could do active battle, even on that rotten ground. At his call they speedily re-formed, and under his command made a fresh charge.

It was now that the real battle took place. The duke of Alençon, who with the duke of Barre headed this division, had made a vow to kill or take captive the king of England, or to perish in the attempt. He led on his troops with desperate valour, and a mortal struggle of two long hours took place. The English archers still wielded their massive axes in the front, and the French men-at-arms fought with undaunted bravery. Henry combated in the midst of his archers, who still plied their weapons with loud hurrahs, and, animated by battling under the eye of the king, seemed still as active and fresh as if they were just come into the strife. Henry's life, however, was repeatedly in danger. His brother, the duke of Clarence, was thrown down near him, wounded, and in danger of being killed, when Henry rushed to his assistance, strode across the body, and beat off the assailants till the prince could be removed. But no sooner was Clarence in safety than a band of eighteen knights, headed by the lord of Croy, confronted the king. They had sworn to each other to take or kill him.

One of these knights struck Henry with his battle-axe, and brought him to his knees; but his brave followers closed round him instantly, and slew every one of the assailants. The duke of Alençon then fought his way to the royal standard. With one stroke of his battle-axe he beat the duke of York to the ground, and killed him; with the next he clove the crown on Henry's helmet. At that sight every arm was raised—every weapon was directed at him. He saw his imminent peril, and cried out to Henry, "I yield to you: I am Alençon!" Henry held out his hand, but it was already too late: the gallant duke lay dead.

Here the battle may be said to have ended; for though the third division, which was the most numerous of all, was still unbroken, at the sight of the duke of Alençon's troops flying in all directions, they too fell back and began to waver. Another moment and they would have been in full flight, but in the rear of Henry's army, where the priests and the baggage were posted, there rose a loud tumult, and messengers came galloping to say that they were attacked by a large force. Henry immediately believed that this force was that expected hourly under the duke of Brittany; and fearful of being surrounded, he immediately gave orders to kill all the prisoners, lest they should turn against them.

As they had taken their captives, which, since the death of Alençon, was in crowds, they removed their helmets, that, should any occasion arise, they might readily despatch them. The slaughter now made of these helpless men was terrible. Many fell without a chance of resistance, many others struggled and wrestled with their destroyers, but in vain. The scene was terrible, and the French third division, also becoming aware of the attack in the rear, took fresh courage, and prepared to make battle still. But a short time discovered the real cause of the alarm, which the fears of the English had converted into a formidable assault. It was merely a body of peasants under Robinet de Bournonville and Ysambert d'Azincourt, who thought they would profit by the battle, and, while the combatants were in the heat of the action, drive off the English horses, which were all left with the baggage. They little dreamed that their scheme would prove so disastrous to their countrymen, many a noble French knight falling the victim of this stratagem, for which they were afterwards severely punished by their feudal lord, the duke of Burgundy.

The mistake being discovered, Henry gave instant orders to stop the slaughter of the prisoners, and the third division of the French army also coming at the truth, galloped off the field at full speed. Only about six hundred could be prevailed upon to face the enemy, and following their commanders, the earls of Marle and Falconberg, they charged bravely on the conquerors, and either perished or were made captives.

Henry's little army was too much exhausted and too much encumbered with prisoners to be able to pursue the flying legions. He gave orders to see to the wounded, and then summoning the heralds, he traversed the fields, accompanied by his chief barons, and saw the coats of arms of the fallen princes and knights examined, and their names registered. While this was doing, and others were busy stripping the dead, he called to him the French king-at-arms, Mountjoye, who came attended by the other heralds French and English, and he said—"We have not made this slaughter, but the Almighty, as we believe, for the sins of France." Then turning to Mountjoye, he asked—"To whom does this victory belong?" "To the king of England," replied Mountjoye, "and not to the king of France." "And what castle is that which I see at a distance?" continued Henry. "It is called the castle of Azincourt," replied the herald. "Then," said Henry, "since all battles ought to be named after the nearest castle, let this henceforth and lastingly bear the name of the battle of Azincourt."

Having named the field, and "lastingly," according to his own phrase, for it is a name which will stand for ever amongst the most wonderfully fought fields in all the annals of nations, Henry, as if impressed with what appeared to be his sincere idea, that it was the work of Heaven, and that he was its instrument, called together the clergy, and ordered them to perform a service of thanksgiving on the field before the whole army. In allusion to their escape from the enemy and the terrible destruction of their self-confident assailants, they chaunted the Psalm cxiv:—"When Israel came out of Egypt;" and at th

verse, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name give the glory," every man knelt on the ground. They then sang the Te Deum, and so closed the renowned battle of Azincourt.

Of all the battles ever fought by France up to that time none was ever so fatal as that of Azincourt. "Never did so many and so noble men fall in one battle," says their own chronicler, Monstrelet. It was a wholesale slaughter of its princes and nobles. Seven princes of the blood had fallen; the constable D'Albret; the dukes of Brabant, of Barre, and Alençon; the count of Nevers, the brother of the dukes of Burgundy and Brabant, the counts of Marle and another brother, John, brothers of the duke of Barre; the count of Vaudemont, brother to the duke of Lorraine, the archbishop of Sens, the count of Dampierre, the lords Helly, who fell as Henry had promised him, of Rambure, Verchin, and Messire Guichard Dauphin, the other deputy who was sent to Henry before the battle. On the whole there fell that day 10,000 men, amongst whom there was one marshal, thirteen earls, ninety-two barons, fifteen hundred knights, and eight thousand gentlemen.

There were fourteen thousand prisoners left in the hands of the English, amongst whom were the dukes of Orleans and Bourbon, the marshal Bourcicault, the counts Eu, Vendôme, Richemont, Craon, and Harcourt, and seven thousand barons, knights, and gentlemen. No wonder that the news of so direful an overthrow, so unexampled a slaughter and capture of the aristocracy of the country, should spread consternation throughout France.

The highest estimate of the loss of the English is sixteen hundred, while Elmham contends that it was only one hundred, and other contemporary writers that it was only forty. Taking the highest estimate, it was a wonderful disparity between the loss of the conquerors and the conquered. The only persons of note who fell on the English side were the earl of Suffolk and the duke of York, a man whose whole life had been stained with treacheries and meannesses, and of which it might be said that its only honourable incident was its termination.

The horror which fell on the whole of France at the news of this terrible defeat, is described by cotemporary writers as extreme. The whole country appeared stunned and stupefied. Those near to the spot or concerned in it were dejected and inconsolable. The duke of Orleans was found on the field buried beneath a heap of slain, by a brave English squire, Robert Waller; and when made aware of all that had taken place, he seemed like a dead man, and determined to die by starvation. Henry went to console and cheer him, but he found it a difficult task. "How fare you, cousin?" he said; "why do you refuse to eat and drink?" The duke replied that he was resolved to fast. "Not so," said the king; "make good cheer; if God has given me the grace to win this victory, I acknowledge that it is through no merit of mine own. I believe that God has willed that the French shall be punished; and if what I have heard be true, it is no wonder, for they tell me that never was there seen such disorder, such license of wickedness, such debauchery and shameful vices as now prevail in France. It is pitiful and horrible to hear, and certainly the wrath of God must have been awakened."

This was Henry's constant language. When addressing his soldiers before the battle he said,—"We have not come into our kingdom of France like mortal enemies; we have not burnt towns and villages; we have not outraged women and maidens, like our adversaries at Soissons. They are full of sin, and have no fear of God."

No two facts, indeed, could be more striking than the depraved condition of France at that period, and the great advance which Henry had made on his predecessors, the Edwards and the Black Prince, in humanity and sound policy. He went through the country like a man who sought to win the hearts as well as the sovereignty of the people. He strictly forbade all injury to the inhabitants of the districts through which he passed, insisting on everything being duly paid for, so that, instead of the wild demon work of the Black Prince, his father, and great grandfather, he might have been simply marching through his own territory; and it is but justice to his father to say, such had been his practice in his English and Scotch campaigns.

On the following morning the English set forward again from Maisoncelles, on their way to Calais; Henry, still endeavouring to dissipate the gloom of his prisoner, the duke of Orleans, had him to ride along with him, and conversed with him in a kind manner. This was the same young duke of Orleans who had married and already lost Isabella of Valois, the widow of Richard II., whom Henry had so perseveringly endeavoured to gain for himself, but in vain. The disappointed lover was now become the conqueror and master of his successful rival, and though he did not let any feeling connected with the subject appear, it is nevertheless true that he kept Orleans during his own life captive, refusing all ransom for him, as the next heir to France after Charles the Dauphin. Orleans was a beautiful lyric poet, and composed many of his finest poems in the Tower of London. He remained a captive in England twenty-three years.

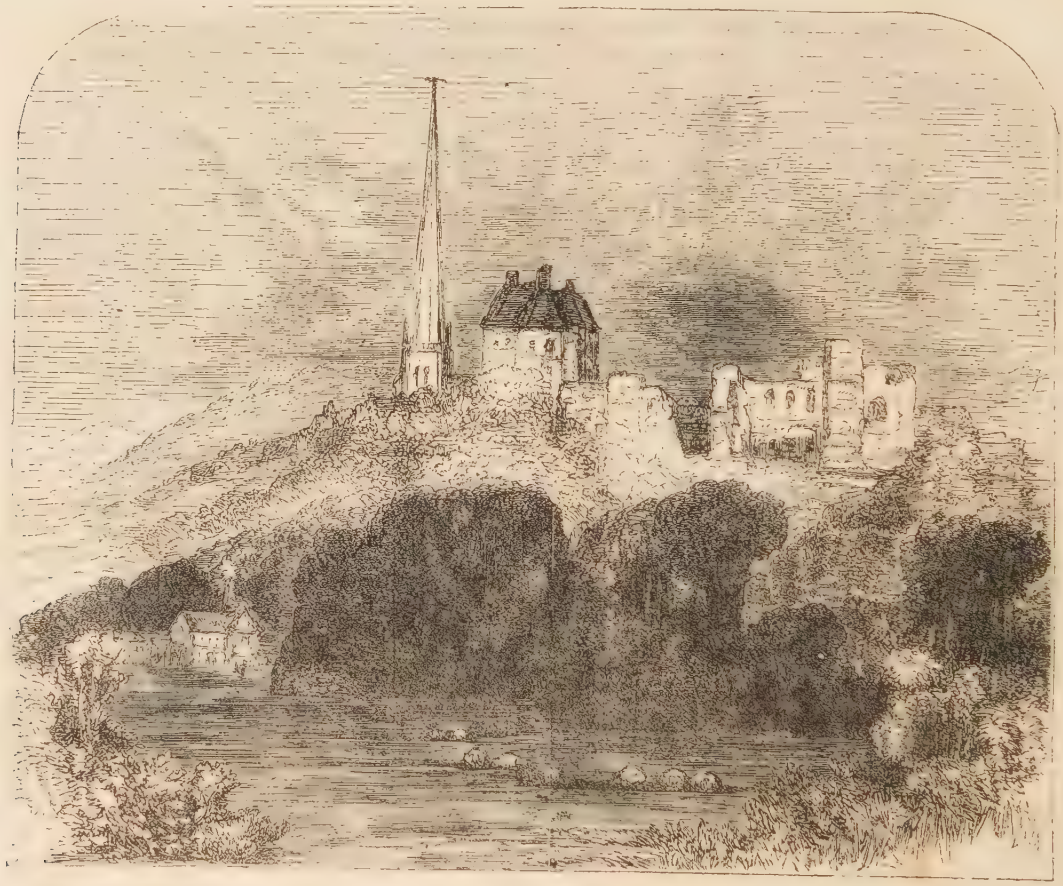
Whilst Henry and the poet-duke of Orleans were that morning riding on in conversation, the English troops on their march after them, as they crossed the field of battle, killed such of the wounded whose case appeared hopeless, to put them out of their pain. They had already stripped the slain of their armour, valuables, and best garments, and no sooner were they off the ground than crowds of peasantry rushed like vultures to the scene of horror, and tore away every remaining rag from their fallen countrymen, leaving on the field more than ten thousand of them as naked as they were born.

Philip, count of Charolais, the son of the duke of Burgundy, afterwards so well known under the name of Philip the Good, was at the time residing in the neighbouring castle of Aire. His father had sternly prohibited him from taking any part in the battle, but so soon as he heard of the catastrophe he was perfectly overwhelmed with grief, and, like the duke of Orleans, refused all sustenance. But the moment that he heard how the dead had been stripped, he sent the bailiff of Aire and the abbot of Ruisseauville to see all the French interred. The English are said to have carried the whole of their dead into a large wooden barn, and burnt them to ashes.

Five thousand eight hundred of the aristocracy of France were buried by the abbot and bailiff in three great pits, in twenty-five roods of land, which they purchased for the purpose; and the bishop of Guisnes went down to these awful, wholesale graves, and sprinkled the dead bodies with holy water, and blest their resting-place, which for ages

afterwards was conspicuous by its inclosure of trees. The count of Charolais conquered his grief sufficiently to attend in person the funerals of his uncles the duke of Brabant and the count of Nevers. The friends of other knights and gentlemen came and carried away their bodies to their own estates, or buried them in the neighbouring churches with much mourning. Thousands of others, who had managed to crawl from the field into the adjoining villages, died and were buried there, but many others perished in the neighbouring woods, the prey of wolves and ravens. And then came down a long drear silence on that terrible field, now become a perpetual name.

The English army, heavily laden with spoil, reached Calais, where they learned that Bardolf, the governor, had gone out with three hundred men-at-arms, to assist in rescuing his sovereign from his apparent danger before the battle; but that he had been intercepted by an overwhelming body of the people of Picardy, and his troops nearly all made prisoners. Here on the 29th Henry called a council to decide his next movement. Had he been prepared, nothing could be more obvious than that if he meant to win France, now was his time, while the whole country was paralysed by this signal defeat, and the chief leaders slain or captive. A rapid march on Paris would probably have made him at once



Ruins of Monmouth Castle, the Birthplace of Henry V

This great battle was fought on the 25th of October, 1415, the day of Crispin and Crispianus, and though the plough has been busy on the spot for upwards of four hundred and forty years, there still remain some traces of the scene. Azincourt lies on the left of the road from St. Omer to Abbeville. The traveller passes through the village of Ruisseauville, so prominent in the account of the battle. The village of Azincourt itself is a group of dirty farm-houses and wretched cottages, but where the hottest of the battle raged, between that village and the commune of Tramecourt, there still remains a wood precisely corresponding with the one in which Henry placed his ambush; and there are yet existing the foundations of the castle of Azincourt, from which the king named the field.

master of the country. But Providence had wisely decreed otherwise, for France won would have reduced England from a great nation to a province; and, indeed, Henry was in no condition to pursue his success. His army was partly already arrived in England; that left with him was surfeited with spoil, and impatient to be there too. It has always been a failing in the character of the aristocracy of England to stop short where they should promptly follow up success; a failing remarkably prominent from those days to the present, as evidenced in the Crimea. Neither Creçy nor Poictiers had produced any result but the barren fame of victory; and Azincourt was only to add to the fruitless catalogue.

In the council of Calais, therefore, language was held

RECEPTION OF SIGISMUND ON THE COAST OF ENGLAND. (See page 536.

which it was known was such as the king wished, namely, that he had done enough to demonstrate his title to the crown of France; that God by the victory of Azincourt had declared his sanction to his claim, and would, therefore, undoubtedly support him in his endeavours at a proper time to complete his conquest.

Henry set sail, and, landing at Dover on the 16th of November, was received by the whole population with the most enthusiastic demonstrations of joy. He was carried in the arms of the people from his ship to the strand, whole crowds plunging in the madness of their delight into the waves, and surrounding him in his triumphal progress with the most deafening acclamations. Never did victor receive a more rapturous and flattering ovation. The whole road to London exhibited one great throng and procession. At Canterbury, Rochester, and every town through which he had to pass, the inhabitants poured forth *en masse* to receive him. At Blackheath, the lords, the commons, the clergy, the mayor, aldermen, and the people of London met him and conducted him into London in one vast and dense crowd. The houses of the streets through which he passed were decorated with tapestry emblazoned with the deeds of his ancestors; wine ran from all the conduits; pageants were erected at intervals, and bands of children festively arrayed sang hymns in his praise. The city terminated its reception by presenting the king with two basins of gold, each worth five hundred pounds. Henry had gratified the vanity of his people to the highest degree, and they poured upon him the incense of applause with unbounded measure. The whole nation was intoxicated with proud delight.

Parliament gave him a substantial proof of its participation in the universal satisfaction. It ordered the tenth and fifteenth voted in its preceding session to be collected at once, and added to it another tenth and fifteenth. It granted him tonnage and poundage for the protection of the seas, and conferred on him for life the subsidy on wool, woolfells, and leather, falling into the same error as Richard II.'s parliament, which by this very measure rendered him independent of annual aid, and the possession of which was made a capital charge against him on his deposition. From Henry, however, they never had cause to repent of their rashness. His fault was not an ambition of arbitrary government; and his affable and generous temperament, combined with the splendour of his deeds, made him during the whole of his short reign one of the most popular of monarchs.

In the spring of the following year, 1416, Henry had the honour of a visit from Sigismund, king of the Romans, and emperor elect of Germany. The object of Sigismund was to secure Henry's aid in accomplishing his great scheme of putting an end to the division in the popedom, which was still raging. Sigismund had visited France, and was flattered by cordial promises of co-operation by Charles and his ministers. Henry, who at this time was by far the most famous sovereign in Europe, was determined to receive Sigismund in a manner which should convince him that the wealth of his kingdom and the splendour of the English crown were in full correspondence with his great fame. He summoned all the knights and esquires of the realm to attend him in London. A fleet of three hundred sail waited at Calais to bring over this unusual guest with all his retinue, amounting to a thousand horsemen; and officers were appointed to escort him from Dover to the capital, discharging all the expenses by the way.

Yet amidst his magnificent arrangements for the reception of his distinguished guest, Henry was cautious not to endanger in the slightest degree his national rights. Sigismund, while in Paris, had attended a cause which was pleaded before parliament, and was in courtesy invited to occupy the throne, and while sitting there, had been so incautious as to knight an esquire who was in danger of suffering wrong because of his inferior rank. To prevent any such mistake, a precaution was taken which, for a moment, had an aspect anything but hospitable. No sooner did the emperor's ship cast anchor, than Sigismund saw the duke of Gloucester and several noblemen ride into the water with drawn swords, and demand to know whether in coming thus, he designed to exercise or claim any authority in England. On Sigismund replying in the negative, this hostile reception immediately gave way to one of courtesy and honour. Besides his main object, the settlement of the papal schism, Sigismund was also anxious to effect a peace between the kings of England and France; and accordingly he was accompanied by ambassadors from Charles, whose propositions were zealously seconded by William, duke of Bavaria and count of Hainault, who was become a great admirer of Henry. It is said that Henry went to such a length of concession as to waive his claims on the crown, and content himself with the provisions of the treaty of Bretigni, concluded by Edward III. But even this would have dismembered France of its most valuable provinces; and, though Charles is stated to have given a full assent to the proposal, there were others who were more averse to any such terms with England.

In the very midst of this apparently amicable negotiation, amid the frightful anarchy of France, the count of Armagnac had now succeeded to the authority of the dauphin John, recently dead, and being also constable in the place of D'Albret, slain at Azincourt, he determined, if possible, to win popularity by wresting from England its recent conquest of Harfleur. He marched there with a large army, drew lines around the town, while a fleet of French ships, aided by a number of Genoese caracks, which he had hired, blockaded the harbour. It was in vain he was reminded of the negotiations pending at London; he determinedly rejected all proposals of truce or peace, and pressed on with all his characteristic ardour the siege of the place.

Henry, alarmed and indignant at the news of this investment at this moment, proposed, in his impetuous promptness, to rush across the channel and fall on Armagnac in person; but Sigismund, his royal guest, suggested to him that it was not a cause of sufficient importance to demand his own presence. He sent the duke of Bedford, his brother, with a fleet to the relief of Harfleur. The duke mustered at Rye such ships as he could procure in haste, and on the 14th of August reached the mouth of the Seine. He found the blockade of a formidable character. The galleys of the Genoese were so tall that the loftiest of the duke's ships could not reach to their upper decks by more than a spear's length. Besides these, there were also Spanish ships of great size, and all were posted with great judgment. Nothing daunted, the duke resolved on attacking them in the morning. At sunset he summoned on board of his ship all the captains of his fleet to

concert the plan of the battle, and during the night he kept his squadron together by displaying a light at his mast-head.

The next morning, the 15th of August, 1416, Bedford was agreeably surprised to see the French quit their secure moorings, and in their rash confidence leave behind their powerful allies of Genoa and Spain, and come out into the open sea to attack him. He very soon captured two of their ships, and, after a long and desperate conflict, most of the rest were taken or destroyed; a few escaping up the river. Bedford lost no time in bearing down on the Genoese galleys, which, notwithstanding their height, his sailors clambered up like squirrels, and boarded them in gallant style. The garrison within the town now joined their countrymen in an attack on the land forces, which speedily raised the siege and fled. The duke remained to see the town put into a complete state of defence; and during this time, which was three weeks, the vast number of bodies which had been plunged into the Seine during the fight, rose and covered the whole of the waters all round the ships, much to the horror of the sailors. The duke led them away as soon as possible, and returned to England, having most successfully completed his mission.

In the following month of September Henry proceeded to Calais, accompanied by his imperial guest Sigismund, who had concluded an alliance with him, and been enrolled a knight of the garter, and by the duke of Bavaria, to meet John Sanspeur, duke of Burgundy. Burgundy, during the late campaign, had professed to remain neuter. Though summoned by Charles to assist in expelling the English, he neither went himself nor permitted his vassals to do so. His county of Flanders not only maintained an avowed neutrality with England, but carried on their usual lucrative trade with it without any regard to French interests. Yet Burgundy had been cautious not to enter into direct engagements with Henry, or to lend any assistance to his invading army. Nay, after the battle of Azincourt, where his brothers the duke of Brabant and the count of Nevers fell, he had expressed great resentment, and even defied Henry to mortal combat. But now circumstances had occurred in France which stung him to the quick, and made him ready to forget even the destruction of his brothers; but to understand the motives for this congress with the king of England and his allies at Calais, we must once more glance at the unhappy condition of France.

Blind to all dangers without, that wretched country was still torn by its mad factions. Not even the thunderbolt which had fallen in their midst in the terrible defeat of Azincourt could long arouse them to a sense of their peril. Scarcely a family in the kingdom but had to mourn the loss of one or more of its members in that enormous carnage, and the highest families the most. There was consequently for a time deep mourning, mingled with shame and indignation. But these feelings rapidly died out before the demon spirit of party hatred. The Burgundians, who had kept in a great measure out of the campaign, soon began to express their joy that the Armagnacs had been so sanguinarily chastised and humbled by the English. The common people held much the same language as the king of England, and denounced the crimes and imbecility of their rulers as the cause of their calamities, and their national disgrace. When the count of Armagnac was placed at the head of affairs, the duke of Burgundy was forbidden to approach Paris, and even insulted by Armagnac with the offer of a pension and the government of Picardy for his son Philip. Burgundy set out on his march to Paris to expel the Armagnacs, but at Troyes was met by a proclamation in the king's name ordering him to disband his troops. He continued his march in defiance of it, pretending that he was in arms only against the English invaders. By the end of November he had reached Lagny, only six leagues from the capital. Here he waited to try the effect of the butcher-faction in the city. He had with him the ferocious Caboche, and other leaders of that terrible clan, and trusted through their means to raise all their savage tribes again in his favour. But the constable, Armagnac, kept them down with a strong hand; and, instead of the long hoped-for success, came the news of the sudden death of the dauphin Louis, his son-in-law. The rumour was that he had been despatched by poison, lest he should join his father-in-law, Burgundy, and admit him to the city. The duke demanded that his daughter, the dauphin's widow, should be given up to him, which was done, but without either her jewels or her dowry; and, disappointed in his attempt on the capital, Burgundy returned home to Flanders.

The condition of that unfortunate city was now as frightful as in some periods of the tremendous revolutions of late years. The Armagnacs raged in their triumph over Burgundy as furiously as Jacobins of our time against the Girondists. They thrust into prison or drove out of the city all who opposed their arbitrary conduct, not merely of the butcher-faction, but the professors of the university who denounced their unpatriotic proceedings, expelling no less than forty of them. But now the count of Armagnac was seized with the ambition of recovering Harfleur from the English, and thus winning popularity; and no sooner had he set out with his army than the partisans of Burgundy produced a new plot in favour of Burgundy. This was to seize on the government in the name of the new dauphin, prince John, and by uniting with him for Burgundy to exercise the administration. But the vigilance of the Armagnac party again defeated this scheme. The chiefs of the agitators were seized. Belloy, a wealthy cloth merchant, and Regnaud, a clergyman highly esteemed for his learning and piety, were seized and beheaded. Orgemont, a canon of Paris, was brought to execution, but was there claimed by the chapter of the cathedral, and sent back to prison, where he died miserably.

Armagnac, at once defeated by the English, and thus endangered by revolt in his absence, returned to Paris in the worst of tempers. He abolished the chief privileges of the city, annihilated the fraternity of butchers, and placed the public under the most stringent despotism. No meetings or assemblings of the citizens, even for the most innocent domestic purposes, were permitted. Not a marriage or a christening could be celebrated without licence from the government, and it must be attended by soldiery and police. Everything which could be possibly used as a missile by the populace was removed. Bottles, heavy pots, iron utensils were taken away and secured, and not a flower-pot was allowed to stand in the windows, lest it should be thrown down on the heads of the troops. All arms were ordered to be delivered up on pain of death, and were deposited in that since so celebrated fortress, the Bastile. The city was in a state of siege, and the infuriated

Armagnacs, having disarmed their enemies, began to put their most dreaded ones to death.

This had the effect of causing all who could to escape from the city, who, adding to the already vast numbers of the expelled Burgundians and butchers, formed themselves into bands, and laid waste the country round Paris. They were soon joined by other predatory forces from Artois, and disorder once let loose grew with terrible rapidity. The whole of France was very soon desolated by wild troops of various descriptions, who preyed on the inhabitants at pleasure. It was one universal anarchy. The numerous mercenary forces of Germans, Lombards, and Savoyards, who had been brought into the country by one or other of the factions which had so long riven the very vitals of France, helped themselves now without control, and ravaged the miserable country at will. The troops which were actually in the pay of the government perpetrated the same outrages on the helpless people, and numerous swarms of the very scum of all these, brigands of the vilest and most lawless character, ranged through the land, committing every species of villainy and horror under the name of "Begeaux." They were still more demoralised than the bands of Free Companions in the time of the Black Prince.

The condition of France was such as defied description. No country ever presented such a spectacle of ruin, misery, crime, and desolation. According to their own writers of the time, whole districts were deserted by their inhabitants, who had many of them been destroyed in the most shocking manner. Many of the most fertile farms had not been cultivated for twenty years. But in the country all round Paris the horrors of this period raged in tenfold degree. Within the city sate the brooding and leaden despotism of the Armagnacs, crushing every motion in the cruel terror of reaction; without raged fire and the most devilish passions of defeated faction. You might have ridden a whole day (say the chroniclers) without seeing a house or farm which was not burnt or plundered. One of the leaders, John de Poix, entered St. Germain-in-Laye, where the king was residing, and, followed by four hundred of his partisans in disguise, attempted to carry him off. De Solré, another, burned the chateaux in the very environs of the city, and, seizing one of the gates, was near entering the city with his brutal hordes.

The count of Armagnac struggled desperately with these legions of savage enemies; and the war of the factions went on, ever more desperate, deadly, and exterminating. He procured a papal ban against these various marauders, and issued a proclamation authorising any one to pursue and destroy them as wild beasts. He sent out troops in different directions to quell them where they could, and, under the pretence of executing their orders, the most sanguinary vengeance was inflicted on the Burgundian partisans. In the neighbourhood of Noyon one of his captains, Raymond de la Guerre, is said to have loaded all the trees in the neighbourhood with noblemen and gentlemen of that faction, whom he hanged without ceremony or mercy.

Such was the condition of France when the duke of Burgundy consented to meet Henry, Sigismund, and the duke of Bavaria at Calais. The spirit of enmity betwixt him and the Armagnacs had reached its height. It was between them war to the death; neither party was any longer capable of a thought besides that of the extermination of the other. Burgundy was expelled and worsted by Armagnac, and he sought the aid of England.

There had been through the year continual correspondence between the courts of Burgundy and England, which purported to concern treaties of trade; and now the congress opened on the 3rd of October, 1416, for the ostensible purpose of healing the schism in the church. The Armagnacs were struck with direst consternation at this ominous conference. They neither gave credit to the object being trade nor the peace of the church; but they believed, and asserted, that Burgundy had sold himself to Henry, had formally acknowledged his title to the throne of France, and done homage to him for his provinces of Burgundy and Alost, in order to avenge himself of his Armagnac opponents. That such a treaty was agitated at the congress is certain, for the protocol is preserved in Rymer, and by it Burgundy was not only to acknowledge Henry's claim, but to assist him in establishing it. There is, however, no proof that he actually signed it.

Whatever was determined upon remains unknown, any farther than it can be surmised from what followed. Henry returned to England to make immediate and extensive preparations for the invasion of France, on the conclusion of the existing armistice. Sigismund went on to Constance in prosecution of his plans for the church, and Burgundy retired to Valenciennes, as if also about to co-operate with Henry by the muster of his Flemish forces. But here a new and unexpected turn of affairs appears to have taken place. John, the new dauphin, had shaken himself loose of the Armagnac party, and made overtures to Burgundy. The duke caught at the opportunity of having the dauphin in his hands, and by such an alliance regaining his ascendency in the state without incurring the odium of supporting a foreign invader against his rightful sovereign.

The two princes swore eternal friendship to each other. The dauphin pledged himself to assist the duke in driving from power the Armagnacs, and the duke engaged to aid the dauphin in expelling the English from France. The Armagnacs, confounded at this new coalition, issued a summons in the king's name to the dauphin to return to Paris, with which the prince offered to comply on condition that he brought the duke of Burgundy and his followers with him. Finding that they could not induce the prince to quit his new ally, there is every reason to believe that they despatched him with poison, for on the 14th of April, 1417, he was taken suddenly ill, and died in agonies with all the symptoms of poison. No one at that time doubted that it was the work of the Armagnacs, and it was generally believed that the abandoned queen Isabella, or more properly Jezebel, was an active accomplice in the destruction of both this and her preceding son, whom she hated for their opposition and exposure of her flagitious life.

But if Isabella was guilty of these revolting crimes, she was speedily punished. Her youngest son, Charles, who now became dauphin, though but sixteen, was extremely artful, and by no means disposed to yield to the domination of his mother, whom he as heartily despised as his elder brothers had done. Isabella, through all the calamities which had afflicted France, had pursued the same unbroken course of vice and dissipation. Her court was a vile sty of sensuality and profligacy, without one trait of pity for the miseries of the people. As one paramour was

assassinated, as was the case with the duke of Orleans, she provided herself with another, and this modern Messalina outraged the feelings of the suffering people by a constant round of balls, masquerades, fêtes, and court galas, while France was pouring its best blood on the battle-field, or famine was raging in the most opulent towns. Age had not abated her heartless follies; the old king was in a state of imbecility, alternating with madness, and was so totally neglected by her, that he was sometimes found half-starved, without attendants, and covered with vermin, from the want of clean linen.

Meantime Isabella lived in royal state in the castle of Vincennes, in the midst of her voluptuous court, and protected by a strong guard, commanded by her paramour, Bois-Bourdon, the sieurs De Graville and De Giac. The moment that there became a strife for power between Isabella and the new dauphin Charles, the king, who had been hitherto perfectly indifferent to the queen's proceedings, and lived obscurely with his own mistress, evinced a wonderful sensitiveness to Isabella's peccadilloes. He had De Bois-Bourdon arrested, put to the torture, and then flung into the Seine, sewn up in a leathern sack, with a label attached—"Let pass the justice of the king." Isabella herself was arrested and sent into close confinement at Tours. The count of Armagnac is said to have the more willingly executed this severity on Isabella, because she had violently complained of his seizure of her treasures both at Paris and Melun, a measure to which the public necessities had driven him.

Enraged to frenzy by the loss of her favourite, of her power, and of her money, Isabella now meditated deep revenge. She had hated the duke of Burgundy with a mortal hatred ever since he assasinated her beloved duke of Orleans; and he had now added to his offences by implicating her in a manner with the murder of her own son, the dauphin John. He had sent all over France a circular letter, accusing in the most unmeasured terms the Armagnac party, with whom Isabella was then actively united, of having poisoned the dauphin, charging on them all the miseries and disgraces that afflicted France, and calling on the people to come forward and punish the murderous traitors. "One evening," said the duke in his letter, "our most redoubtable lord and nephew fell so grievously sick, that he died forthwith. His lips, tongue, and face were swollen; his eyes started out of his head; it was a horrible sight to see, for so look people that are poisoned."

Yet the very next thing which the public heard was that Isabella had escaped from her prison at Tours, and thrown herself into the arms of the duke of Burgundy, her old and most detested enemy. Such are the terrible extremes of a bad woman's vengeance. She now burned, at any cost, to revenge herself on Armagnac, and not less so on her own son Charles, whose destruction she sought as earnestly as she had done that of his brothers. This most unnatural woman had bribed her keepers to allow her to attend early mass at the church of Marmontier, in the suburbs of Tours. They accompanied her, but suddenly found themselves surprised by the duke of Burgundy, who had secreted himself for the purpose in a neighbouring forest, with eight hundred men-at-arms. The moment Isabella was in the guardianship of this prince, she proclaimed herself regent of the kingdom during the continuance of the king's malady, and the duke of Burgundy her lieutenant.

Such was the position of affairs in France at the moment that Henry V. of England landed at Touque, on the coast of Normandy, on the 1st of August, 1417, with sixteen thousand men-at-arms, an equal number of archers, and a long train of artillery, and other military engines, attended by an efficient body of sappers, miners, carpenters, and other artificers, and a fleet of fifteen hundred ships. Two years had elapsed since the fatal battle of Azincourt; yet the infatuated princes of France, though they knew that Henry never had his eyes off their country, but was constantly employed in planning its subjugation, had taken no measures whatever for its defence. On the contrary, they had spent the time in mutual destruction, and in doing all in their power to exhaust its strength, and demoralise the people. They appeared given up by an indignant Providence to the destroying force of their own base passions, a nation of suicidal monsters rather than of men; and while Henry of England was landing on their coasts with his invading army, the duke of Burgundy was in full march on Paris, accompanied by the queen, breathing vengeance on the Armagnacs.

Burgundy, after the sudden death of the dauphin, had besieged that city with an army of sixty thousand cavalry. He promised to restore peace, and abolish all oppressive taxes. The people in the country were ready to look upon him as a deliverer; and many cities, including Amiens, Abbeville, Dourlens, Montreuil, and other towns in Picardy opened their gates to him. Paris, in the hands of the Armagnacs, made a steadfast resistance. He, however, became master of Chalons, Troyes, Auxerre, and on being joined by Isabella, most of the towns, except those taken by the king of England, declared for Burgundy and the queen. Isabella had a great seal engraved, and appointed her officers of state. She declared that the Armagnacs held the king and dauphin prisoners in Paris, and were, therefore, traitors. She made Burgundy governor-general of the whole kingdom, appointed the duke of Lorraine constable, and the prince of Orange governor of Languedoc. There was a great flocking of princes and nobility to the queen's court, and thus there were established two royal parties and two courts, the one with the king and dauphin in Paris, the other with the queen at Chartres. The people, elated by the promises of Burgundy, rose in many places and killed the tax-gatherers, crying, "Long live Burgundy, and no taxes!" They regarded every rich man as an Armagnac, for that was a good plea on which to plunder him; and thus passed the winter of 1417.

Meantime Henry of England advanced into the heart of Normandy, having on setting out issued to his army orders in consonance with those enlightened principles of humanity and policy which he had adopted in such noble contrast to the practice of the Edwards. He forbade, on pain of the severest punishment, all breaches of discipline, all injury to the lives and property of the peaceable inhabitants, and especially of insult to clergymen, or outrage to the wives, widows, and maidens of the country. Yet the Normans, neglected by their own rulers, who were engaged like wolves in tearing each other's throats instead of defending their common soil, still retained their allegiance, and regarding Henry, not as the descendant of their ancient dukes, but as a foreign invader, rejected him with great

bravery. Probably the atrocities committed on them by the Edwards had thoroughly alienated their hearts from the English. But they were unable to contend with the superior forces and martial skill of Henry; and Fouques, Auvillers, and Villers surrendered after short sieges; Caen resisted, but was taken by assault; Bayeaux submitted voluntarily; and l'Aigle, Lisieux, Alençon, and Falaise, after some stout resistance. Henry then went into comfortable winter quarters, intending to proceed on the return of spring with his proposed task of reducing every fortress in Normandy. During the winter, however, he made occasional military demonstrations as the weather permitted, and received deputations from both the great parties in the state; but he steadily refused to treat on any other terms than that he should receive the hand of the princess Catherine, should be at once appointed regent of the country, and declared successor to the crown on the king's death. The attempts at reconciliation between the factions themselves were equally abortive.

While Henry was thus successfully prosecuting his campaign in Normandy, there had occurred a slight disturbance at home. The Scots, thinking that, the king being absent with the flower of the army, the kingdom must be left greatly unprotected, made a descent upon England. The duke of Albany and earl Douglas crossed the borders each with an army, and while Albany laid siege to the castle of Berwick, Douglas invested that of Roxburgh. But the dukes of Exeter and Bedford, the regent, made a rapid march northward with such forces that the Scotch leaders suddenly abandoned their enterprise, and disbanded their armies.

Simultaneous with this inroad once more appeared Sir John Oldcastle, lord Cobham, on the scene. He had been concealed in Wales, but the absence of the king afforded him also the expectation of taking vengeance on his enemies. It has been surmised that the Scotch and Sir John had mutually concerted this attack. Be this, however, as it may, for it is merely supposition, there can be no doubt that both Sir John and the Lollards in general were greatly embittered by the cruelties practised on them by the bishops. These dignitaries had set them the example of bloodshed, and had certainly taken the initiative in the attempt to put down difference of theological opinion by destroying their opponents, and during the three years that lord Cobham had eluded them, they had pursued and burnt the Lollards with increasing severity. Such lessons are readily taught, and nothing could be more natural than that the injured party should seek retaliation in kind. Sir John, too, was probably deeply incensed by his old companion the king giving him over so forcibly to the tender mercies of the clergy; and, though they could not in this case assert that he sought his life, he probably felt little compunction in disturbing his government in the endeavour to come at the official persecutors.

The hasty retreat of the Scots defeated the intentions of the Lollards, and lord Cobham, hastening from his rendevous near St. Alban's, endeavoured to regain the Welsh mountains, but he was intercepted near Broniart, in Montgomeryshire, by the retainers of Sir Edward Charlton, earl of Powis.

When brought before the house of peers, his former indictment read, and asked by the duke of Bedford what he had to say in his defence, he made a bold and able speech; but being stopped and desired to give a direct answer, he refused to plead, declaring that there was no authority in that court so long as Richard II. was alive in Scotland; for it seems, like many others, he was still of opinion that the Scotch Richard was genuine. He was at once condemned, and was hanged as a traitor in St. Giles's Fields, and burnt as a heretic, December, 1417.

In the spring of 1418 Henry resumed his operations in Normandy with vigour. He had received a reinforcement of fifteen thousand men, so that he could divide his forces, and conduct several operations at the same time. Amongst his new troops appeared a new race on the continent, which excited especial wonder amongst the French. These were a regiment of Irish, who were now sufficiently reconciled to the English rule to form a portion of their army. Monstrelet, the great French chronicler of those times, says, "The king of England had with him numbers of Irish, mostly men on foot, having only a stocking and shoe on one leg and foot, with the other leg and foot quite naked. They carried targets, short javelins, and a strange sort of knives. Those who had horses had no saddles, but they rode excellently well on small mountain horses. These Irish did oftimes make excursions all over Normandy, doing infinite mischief, and bringing back to the camp much spoil and forage. They took men, and even little children from the cradle, with beds, furniture, and all, and, mounting them on the top of the booty, on cows and bullocks, drove them all before them, for the French often fell in with them riding in this manner." They took the men and children for ransom; but the French were greatly horrified at them, for they believed that they took the little children to eat.

The dukes of Gloucester and Clarence, the king's brothers, took the command of different bodies of troops and proceeded to reduce the strongest towns in Lower Normandy. Gloucester compelled Cherbourg to surrender, after a long and obstinate defence, on the 29th of September; but before this most of the towns of Lower Normandy had opened their gates. Henry advanced along the Seine and made himself master of the whole country from Louviers to the sea; finding, in this part of his campaign, infinite advantage from his conquest of Harfleur. Pont de l'Arche completed the possession of all Lower Normandy, with the exception of Cherbourg, which Gloucester was blockading. By July, making certain of the ultimate fall of this city, Henry regarded Lower Normandy as his own. The people had defended their cities with obstinate valour. In vain he reminded them that he was the descendant of their own Rollo, and that all his nobles drew their origin from Normandy. The Normans had fresher and more recent memories—those of the havoc of the Edwards, and the repeated burning of their ports and ravaging of their coasts by the English. The two people had ceased to speak the same language, and the barbarities of war had placed a huge gulf of national antipathies between them.

Henry did all in his power to efface these cruel recollections. He maintained a strict adherence to his orders for the protection of the inhabitants, though we fear his Irish troops were found rather difficult to deal with on this head; and he abolished the gabelle, an odious duty on salt, and other oppressive impositions. He was ever open to appeals against injury and injustice; and his manners were most affable and winning to all who approached him. Before

THE MASS IN THE ABBEY CHURCH OF MARMONTIER. (See page 539.)

proceeding to the siege of Rouen, he organised a government for Lower Normandy, appointed a chancellor and treasurer, and left that part of France, though under a foreign rule, far more quiet and habitable than any other district of the realm.

The siege of Rouen was the grand operation which was not only to lay all Normandy at the feet of the conqueror, but open the highway to Paris. Rouen, the capital of Upper Normandy, was at that time one of the most populous and beautiful cities in France. It is situated within a semicircle of hills, smooth in character, but of considerable elevation; and its southern side is washed by the broad waters of the Seine. It is said to have contained two hundred thousand inhabitants; but, if that were true, a very large proportion must have inhabited the suburbs. The present boulevards, which surround the old portion of the city, terminated by the river at each end, stand on the site of the ancient ditch and defences; and though the buildings are as dense and the streets as narrow as they could possibly be in the time of Henry V., they do not include more than half the present population, which is merely calculated at ninety-one thousand. These ninety-one thousand have spread themselves on every side, far beyond the boulevards, the ancient limits. They extend over the pleasant ranges of Cauchois, Beauvoisine, and La Monté on the north and west; for two miles eastward, with intermingled gardens and manufactories, up the valley of Martinville, on the north side of St. Catherine's Hill; for a mile or more, with wharfs and works of trade, along the banks of the Seine in the same direction; and on the southern bank of the river, in the faubourg St. Sever, lies a population of at least ten thousand people, amid the smoke of tall chimneys and the sounds of manufacturing industry, which two bridges connect with the old city. Where, then, the two hundred thousand inhabitants of Henry's time could have stowed themselves, while the less than one hundred thousand of the present Manchester of France demand so much room, is a problem not easily solved. If they occupied the suburbs to a similar extent, they must, at the approach of the English army, have been burnt out and dispersed into the country at large, for the Rouenese determined to defend their city to the last. The general commanding there, Guy le Bouteillier, at once set fire to all the suburbs, destroying every house, garden, and fence without the walls, that they might afford no shelter to the enemy, and made the whole circle of the environs of Rouen one naked and black desert.

The French calculated greatly on the resistance of Rouen; they fondly hoped that it would altogether arrest the progress of the conqueror, and do that for the wretched government which it took no pains to do for itself. The city was strongly fortified. On all sides it was enclosed by massive ramparts, towers, and batteries. Fifteen thousand trained men, and a garrison of four thousand men-at-arms were collected within it. Many of these were gentlemen of Lower Normandy, who, having vainly endeavoured to check the progress of the enemy in their own neighbourhood, had retired hither to assist in making one last and determined stand against the power which had driven them from hearth and home. The governor had made every preparation for the most obstinate resistance. Not only had he laid waste the environs and annihilated the suburbs, but he had commanded every man and every family to quit the city who had not provisions for ten months, and the magistrates had enforced the order.

Henry has indeed been blamed, in a military point of view, for not making a rush upon Rouen so soon as he had reduced Harfleur, and opened to himself the Seine. Then, it is said, Rouen was feebly garrisoned, was full of people stricken with panic, and the defences were in an imperfect condition. By prosecuting the sieges of successive smaller towns he had allowed the Rouenese ample time to prepare for his approach, to strengthen their old fortifications and add new ones, to reduce the useless mouths and increase the militant hands. This is probably true; but Henry knew that it was only a work of time, of which the French allowed him any quantity, and he went on step by step, confident of accomplishing his object.

On the 30th of July he appeared before the town. He had two hundred sail of small vessels on the Seine, so that he could convey his troops to any portion of the environs. He found the brave and patriotic Bouteillier ready to encounter him. Instead of lying concealed behind his strong walls, he met him in the open field, and attacked him with the utmost impetuosity. The battle was desperate and bloody, and though ultimately compelled by the numbers and the tried valour of the English to retire, he never ceased to renew the attack, and interrupt the commencement of Henry's works for the investment of the place. He continually made fierce sorties, destroyed his embankments, beat up the quarters of the soldiers now here, now there, and greatly obstructed the operations of the besiegers.

At length Henry succeeded in encamping his army in six divisions before the six gates of the city. He protected these by lofty embankments from the shot from the city and connected them with each other by deep trenches, so that the men could pass from one to the other without danger from the arrows of the enemy. Then, finally, the whole town on the land sides was enclosed in strong military lines, which he strengthened with thick hedges of thorn, and on the most commanding situations without the camp he placed towers of wood, batteries of cannon, and engines for the projection of arrows and stones.

At the present day, with our scientific engineering and our immense power of artillery, the situation of Rouen must be pronounced weak, provided that an enemy is once in possession of the heights around it. From these, and especially from the hill of St. Catherine, which, nine hundred feet in height, immediately and prominently overlooks the eastern end of the town, modern batteries would demolish the whole city in a single day. But at that time, though formidable trains of artillery are talked of, they were unquestionably clumsy, inefficient, and ill-directed. Cannon was brought by the French to Azincourt, but we hear of nothing that it did, while the grand weapon of that day, the yew-bow and the cloth-yard shaft, familiar to the brawny arms of British yeomen, carried death wherever they came. Henry is said to have discharged stone balls of a foot diameter from huge cannon at Harfleur, and one of these very stones is yet preserved in the court of the Museum of Antiquities at Rouen of still greater diameter; while two of these enormous guns, one containing one of these ponderous balls, are shown at Mount St. Michael in Normandy. However, Henry found himself unable to make a breach in the walls by any power that he possessed, or to bombard the town from the heights, and set zealously

to work thoroughly to invest the place, and reduce it by blockade.

Yet he was in entire possession of all the surrounding eminences, and especially of that of St. Catherine, from which he drove the garrison. The numbers of English travellers who every summer climb this verdant hill, and behold from it the whole magnificent panorama of the city and its environs, one of the most lovely scenes in the world, still behold the ancient town itself much as it might be supposed to meet the eye of Henry V. Those pleasant slopes to the north and west, instead of gay villas and umbrageous gardens, as now, were covered with tents and armies. The populous valley of Martinville, and the wide, flat suburb of St. Sever, across the river, the Southwark of Rouen, were then burnt and waste, and not, as now, busy with manufactories, with bleaching grounds and streaming people; but the old town presented its broad mass of red and almost continuous roofs, and the cathedral, St. Ouen, St. Maclou, and a score of other stately churches, some of the noblest ecclesiastic structures in the world, rose high into the air above towers and palaces. These magnificent churches, now hoary with age, were then comparatively new; reared in all the exuberance of the florid style, every buttress, port, and finial, every tower, to its dizzy summit, encrusted with work delicate and clear as if carved in ivory; every glorious window and soaring spandrel perforated with the most gorgeous tracery. We may believe that Henry—who was not like most of the princes and nobles of those days, an illiterate, or semi-illiterate man, but who had been educated at Oxford, and had intellectual tastes, and was especially fond of music, and a master himself on the harp—would pause, even if he had the power, ere he would willingly let loose destruction on so fair a scene. In the choir of that proud cathedral lay the lion heart of Richard of England; in its southern aisle, the dust of Rollo, the founder of his race; and many a recollection of the proudest days of Normandy and Normanic England clustered around it. Far and wide, wherever his eye fell, and it could range over scores of miles, it was a scene befitting the locality of such a capital. The lovely Seine flowed on through the richest meadows, its bosom gemmed by numbers of the most wooded and fairy-like islands, and swept the feet of the precipitous chalk cliffs of St. Catharine with a serene grace, that seemed to promise ages of peaceful abundance to that fair capital.

Such were not improbably the thoughts of the king, for he resolved to spare the city, but to win it. He therefore pressed on his works, which, extending over a circuit of several miles, required enormous labour and much time. The troops of Bouteillier did not allow him to construct these in quiet. They continued to make daring sorties; and many a gallant deed of arms was done under the walls of the city. But Henry continually brought up fresh troops; the camp on St. Catharine itself, as is obvious to all who contemplate the immense traces of its fortifications, could, if necessary, shelter ten thousand men. He collected vast numbers of workmen also from the country round; and, finally, so completed his circumvallations, that neither could the sallying garrison make any impression, nor could a single article of provisions find its way into the city. All such supplies from the river he had cut off by drawing three strong chains of iron across it above the city, and three similar ones below. Above, near his own troops, and protecting them, he threw across a bridge and near the bridge he moored a squadron of boats, which he had had dragged over land by enormous labour of men and horses. He had a fleet of hired Portuguese ships guarding the mouth of the river; and the banks and islands of the Seine were protected by detachments of soldiers. Supporting these strong defences he had a numerous garrison at Pont de l'Arche; and, while he shut out all supplies from the town, his two hundred small vessels in the river plied to and fro, bringing in abundance to his camp from the whole country.

These stringent measures soon began to tell. Before two instead of ten months had expired famine had shown its hideous face. Though the governor had reduced the population greatly before the siege commenced, he now expelled from the city twelve thousand more useless mouths, as they were termed in the iron language of war. Henry forbade them to be admitted within the lines, for the tender mercies of sieges are cruel under the most humane of commanders. To permit at will the expulsion of the people was to prolong the siege, and, therefore, as at Calais, under Edward I., notwithstanding some of these wretched outcasts were fed by the humanity of the troops, the greater number perished through want of food and shelter.

But within the city famine stalked on, and the misery was terrible. During the third month the besieged killed and subsisted on their horses. After that, for ten months, they killed the dogs and cats; and the necessity growing more and more desperate, they descended to rats, mice, and any species of vermin they could clutch in their famine-sharpened fingers. It is said that, in the whole siege, from famine, from the wretched unwholesome food eaten, by the sword, and other means, no less than fifty thousand of the inhabitants perished.

All this time the unhappy people cried vehemently to the duke of Burgundy, the head of the government, for succour. Their messengers returned with flattering but fallacious promises, but no relief was ever sent. On one occasion the heartless minister even fixed the precise day on which he would arrive in force and compel the English to raise the siege. At this news a wild joy ran like lightning through the famishing city. The bells were rung with mad exultation; people ran to and fro spreading the glad tidings and uttering mutual congratulations. The troops were ordered to be every man in readiness to rush forth at the right moment, and second the assault of their friends without. The day came and went; no deliverer appeared, and a deadly despair sank down on the devoted city.

It was in the midst of these horrors that the Cardinal Ursini, who had in vain exerted himself to reconcile the insensate factions, now turned to Henry, and entreated him to moderate his pretensions, and incline to peace. But Henry was too sagacious a politician to renounce the advantages which the folly and crimes of his enemies opened up to him. He was willing to make overtures of peace, and he did so to both parties, but it was still on his fixed terms of the sovereignty of France. He repeated his clear persuasion that his work was the work of an avenging Providence. "Do you not perceive," he said to Ursini, "that it is God who has led me hither by the hand? France has no sovereign. There is nothing here but confusion; there is no law, no order. No one thinks of

resisting me. Can I, therefore, have a more convincing proof that the Being who disposes of empires, has determined to put the crown of France upon my head?"

And truly the continued and inconceivable baseness of every section of the dominant powers, their absolute destitution of every particle of patriotism or of virtue, gave great warrant to this language and belief. All this time, while Henry was overrunning the fairest province of France, and while the people of Rouen were enduring such sufferings in its defence, those mad princes and the people of Paris were steadily pursuing their revolting career of murder, massacre, and mutual malignancy. The strange scenes which had taken place since Henry commenced his second campaign, that of 1418, exceed everything in history, except such as have followed them in the same country.

After the union of Burgundy and the queen, Armagnac grew more savage in his retaliative warfare. He sent from Paris his captains Tannegui du Chastel and Barbazan to attack the Burgundians. They carried on a murderous warfare, taking several towns and fortresses, and putting their garrisons to the sword. Armagnac himself took the field, and, being repulsed from Senlis, in revenge he beheaded all his prisoners. Then the bastard of Thian, the Burgundian commander, in retaliation, also put to death his prisoners. Such was the devilish atrocity to which the contending chiefs had arrived, that it began to revolt the most callous. The bishop of Paris took courage and opened a correspondence with Burgundy. The dauphin, who, as as well as his imbecile father, was in the hands of Armagnac, also sent agents to treat with the duke and the queen his mother. The pope, Martin V., had sent the cardinals Ursini and St. Mark to endeavour to mediate between the factions, and to put an end to this scandalous condition of things, and they succeeded in making a treaty with Burgundy and the queen. The people of Paris were in raptures at the news, but Armagnac was still in the city with a strong garrison; he had still the wretched king and the dauphin in his power; and he refused to recognise the treaty, and proceeded to proscribe and put to death as traitors all who dared to utter a different sentiment. The city was deluged with blood. But his time was now come. The whole people were weary of his savage despotism, and were ripe themselves for some desperate deed.

A company of young men had entered into secret correspondence with the Burgundians; and on the night of the 29th of May, Perrinet le Clerk, one of their number, opened the gate of St. Germain-des-Prés to L'Isle-Adam, a captain of the duke of Burgundy, and this troop marched in profound silence to the Chatelet, where they were joined by five hundred of the inhabitants. They then divided into different bodies, and, having admitted the whole garrison of Pontoise, they ran through the streets, crying, "Our Lady of Peace! Long live Burgundy! Let those who are for peace come and follow us!"

The mass of the people obeyed the summons with instant alacrity. They threw on their clothes and followed the Burgundians, who hastened to the houses of the chief Armagnacs, dragged them from their beds, and thrust them into prison. Tannegui du Chastel, a Breton, and one of the most daring of the Armagnacs, ran to the chamber of the dauphin, and carried him off, wrapped merely in his bed-clothes, to the Bastile, from whence he escaped to Melun. But scarcely did Du Chastel disappear from one door of the dauphin's chamber, when the mob broke in, and, missing him, seized all the gentlemen of his retinue, and sent them to prison. L'Isle-Adam, meantime, had hurried to the Hotel St. Pol, where the king lived, and, securing him, they set him on a horse, idiotic as he was, and paraded him through the streets, to convince the people that all they did was by his orders. The count of Armagnac himself, who had fled and concealed himself in the house of a mason, was given up to L'Isle-Adam by this man, in terror of the denunciation against all who protected him.

On the 11th of June, Tannegui du Chastel made a sortie with sixteen hundred men from the Bastile, in the hope of recovering Paris; but he was driven back to his retreat, the people flinging down upon him and his followers at every step all kinds of missiles from their windows and roofs. The Armagnacs had killed a considerable number of poor people in the Faubourg St. Antoine, and now the mob in their rage fell on the Armagnac citizens, and massacred all they could find. Women, and even children, like demons in their fury, dragged the dead Armagnacs about the streets, mutilating and insulting them in their diabolical frenzy.

No sooner was the news of this revolution spread than the equally brutalised population of the country came pouring into Paris to share in the plunder and carnage. The Burgundian butchers once more walked the streets of the capital in sanguinary ascendency, and Paris was a hell! Had not avarice come in to stay the hand of murder, in the hope of ransom, not a single Armagnac would have been left alive.

But even yet the horror had not culminated. Instead of the duke of Burgundy and the queen, now in the ascendant, exerting themselves to restrain the cruelty and restore order, they kept aloof—Burgundy at Montbelliard, and the queen at Troyes; and they are accused of even stimulating the massacre of their defeated enemies. Nothing short of the monstrosity of crime to which those long and deadly feuds had led at this time could induce us to credit such appalling suggestions. But the queen is related to have replied to a deputation sent to invite her to Paris, that she would never set foot again in that city while a single Armagnac breathed in it. On the other hand, though Tannegui du Chastel had fled to Bourges with the dauphin, a hundred and fifty miles off, rumours, said to be traceable to the Burgundian camp, were constantly spreading that he was on his way to surprise Paris, release all the Armagnac captives, and slay every Burgundian, man, woman, and child.

These rumours were incessantly revived, keeping the people in perpetual alarm, and irritating them to a state of mind bordering on desperation. At length, on the night of Sunday, the 12th of June, cries were heard in the streets that Tannegui was at the gates, and that all Paris would be butchered. The people, roused to a pitch of uncontrolled fury, swore that there would be no peace while one Armagnac lived. They rushed out, armed and implacable, crying, "Peace for ever! Long live the duke of Burgundy!" L'Isle-Adam endeavoured, at the head of his soldiery, to appease their murderous designs; but he and his thousand men were nothing in the path of a whole city breathing destruction. They gave way, and the wild mob rushed on, crying that the Armagnacs were dogs; that they had ruined France; were now in treaty to make it

over to the English; and had prepared English flags to plant on the walls of Paris. They burst open the prison doors, they ranged like wild beasts through the houses of the Armagnacs; and there was one fierce, deadly, universal massacre.

The count of Armagnac, who had so long ridden on the crest of the troubled sea of French affairs, was one of the first on whom they glutted their thirst of blood; and his mangled remains were dragged with curses for three days through the streets of Paris by the excited women and children. The wild work of extermination went on for many days. In the first outbreak of this carnival of Moloch, between four o'clock in the morning and mid-day, one thousand five hundred persons perished. In the three first days, besides the constable, the chancellor, and six bishops, three thousand five hundred persons of eminent rank and character were put to death. The streets ran with blood; and when murder had wearied itself out, or ceased for want of fresh victims, pestilence took up the work, and the whole tale of the victims of this outbreak is said to have amounted to fourteen thousand persons, of whom five thousand were women.

In the midst of these horrors the queen and the duke of Burgundy made their entry into Paris in triumph on the 14th of July. The streets, not yet dried from the blood of the massacred, were strown with flowers; and these contemptible princes, themselves stained with more than one murder, or the reputation of it, rode on as if nothing had occurred. The butcheries had not ceased when they entered Paris, and they rather encouraged than put a stop to them, for they had spites of their own which they sought to gratify. They got the poor doting king into their possession, and, thus armed with the royal authority, they made use of the leaders of the mob to execute their own vengeance on those they hated, and then executed their tools to pacify the people. They made strenuous endeavours to secure the person of the dauphin; but Tannegui du Chastel and the Armagnacs had him at Bourges, and kept good watch over him. They then entered into negotiations with him, offering him terms of coalition, and doing all in their power to allure him to Paris; but such overtures were hopeless while the whole Armagnac party were burning for revenge of their late butchery. Though the old count of Armagnac was dead, his son was alive, and vowing the most signal retribution. With the count of Dreux, and other French barons, he had been harassing Henry's province of Guienne as a diversion in favour of Normandy; but he and his associates at once made peace with the king of England and joined the dauphin, demanding justice on his father's assassins. Tannegui du Chastel, equally eager for revenge, and more truculent, denounced extermination to the Burgundians. By their advice the dauphin assumed the title of regent, repudiating his mother's right to it, and opened a parliament at Poictiers.

Thus France, after all the murders of the heads of its factions, had still two factions as decided and iniquitous as ever. Each of these factions sought to make an alliance with Henry, the common enemy of their claims. Henry amused them as long as it suited his purpose. He sent commissioners to meet those of the dauphin at Alençon, and those of Burgundy at Pont de l'Arche; and having heard all they had to say without at all communicating his own views, at length dismissed them with the insulting observations that the dauphin was a minor, the king not of sound mind, and Burgundy's authority doubtful, so that no safe treaty could be made with any of them.

During these attempts at negotiation Henry still pressed on the siege of Rouen. Winter was now setting in, and the famished citizens saw its approach with horror. They had long been reduced to the severest condition of starvation, and still the determined de Bouteillier held out. They had consumed every green and every living thing but themselves and their children. The inky Robec, flowing through and under Rouen, the Styx of the place, had long ceased to furnish one desperate rat to the hungry watchers. The time was come when a man looked at his neighbour's leathern girdle with fierce desire, and an old shoe was the only material for a stew. A lizard, a bat, or a snail were luxuries which only could be purchased by the rich. Gaunt Famine, the sternest of all conquerors, now subdued the iron hardihood of the governor, and he offered on the 3rd of January to capitulate; but Henry insisted on unconditional surrender. Bouteillier, indignant and in despair, assembled the garrison, and proposed to them to set fire to the city, to throw down a portion of the wall, which was already undermined by the English, and burst headlong into the camp of the enemy, where, if they could not cut their way through, they should at least perish as became soldiers.

This stoical design, as terribly sublime as any project of antiquity, reaching the ears of Henry, he lowered his demands. It was impossible not to be struck with such heroism in men wasted by months of utter want, and he had no wish to see Rouen a heap of smoking ruins. He offered the soldiers their lives and liberties on condition that they did not serve against him for twelve months; and he guaranteed to the citizens their property and their franchises on the payment of three hundred thousand crowns. On the 13th of January, 1419, the terms of surrender were signed, and on the 19th Henry entered the city in triumph. To his honour he strictly observed the treaty, suffering no infringement of the citizens' rights, nor displaying any signs of vengeance. The only person excepted from this clemency was a priest who had, during the siege, excommunicated him, and pronounced the direst curses upon him. Him he imprisoned for life; and a captain of the city militia was executed a few days after the entrance of the city, for treasonable designs.

The fall of Rouen was the fall of the whole province. The fortresses which had hitherto held out now speedily opened their gates, and the red cross of England waved on all the towers of Normandy, announcing it an appanage of England.

CHAPTER LXXI.

Reign of Henry the Fifth concluded—Henry meets the French Court, and demands the Princess Catherine in Marriage—Deluded by his Allies—Assassination of the Duke of Burgundy—Treaty of Peace at Troyes—Henry's Marriage—Siege and Conquest of Melun—Henry's Triumphal Entry into Paris as Regent of France and Heir to the Throne—Return to London and Coronation of the Queen—Death of the Duke of Clarence at the Battle of Beaujé—Henry returns to France—Siege of Meaux—Birth of Prince Henry—The King's Sickness and Death.

THE surrender of Rouen was a shock to the whole kingdom of France, sufficient, one would have thought, to bring the contending factions to a pause, and unite them for the protection of their common country; but for a time it appeared

to produce little effect on the rival parties themselves. The people at large were struck with consternation, and loudly complained that they were made the victims of the vices and jealousies of their rulers. The people of Paris saw exposed to the arms of the victor, who, it was well known, was preparing to march along the Seine and invest the city with all his forces. They represented that the people of the provincial towns had been left to fight their own battles,

Rouen, from the Hill of St. Catherine.

with indignation the duke of Burgundy and the queen flee out of the city, carrying the king with them, and establish their head-quarters at Lagny. They looked upon themselves as basely betrayed, and that the capital was left but in vain; and now Paris was abandoned to its fate in the same scandalous manner. The most vehement representations were made to the heads of the hostile factions to settle their quarrels and combine to repulse the invader. This

wise counsel was wholly thrown away. Neither party showed any disposition to reconciliation, but each hastened to open negotiations with Henry of England, in order, by his means, to be able to crush the other.

The duke of Burgundy, who always courted popularity, endeavoured to pacify the Parisians by issuing a proclamation assuring them that he was doing all in his power to remove the impediments to peace and the settlement of the country. All, however, that was visible, was that he sent

Cardinal Ursini's Visit to Henry V. (See page 543.)

an embassy to Henry at Rouen, proposing to attempt terms of agreement betwixt him and France. The dauphin, on his part, went further, and offered to meet Henry, and endeavour personally to accommodate matters. Henry listened courteously to both parties, accepting their proposals with the utmost frankness, at the same time that he promised nothing. The dauphin, however, himself of a treacherous disposition, hesitated to put himself into the power of Henry, and failed to keep his appointment. Burgundy, was no sooner informed of this, than availing himself of it, as a favourable opportunity on his side, he sent a fresh deputation to Rouen; armed, as he believed, with peculiar temptations. These were a beautiful portrait of the princess Catherine, accompanied by a message from the queen, her mother, significantly asking whether so charming a princess really needed so great a dowry as he demanded with her. The ambassadors reported on their return, that they found the young conqueror at Rouen, "as proud as a lion;" that he took the portrait of Catherine, gazed long and earnestly upon it, acknowledged that it certainly was beautiful; but refused to abate a jot of his demands. What was still more decisive was the news that he had left Rouen, recrossed the Seine, and had advanced along its banks already as far as Mantes, within fifty miles of Paris.

No time was to be lost. Burgundy and Isabella sent off a fresh embassy, proposing to meet Henry, accompanied

by Catherine, from whose personal charms they hoped much, being apprised that the mere picture of her had made an obvious impression on the victor's imagination. Henry acceded promptly to the proposal; but as promptly made another advance to Vernon. Meantime he despatched the earl of Warwick to Burgundy and the queen at Provins. High and unbending as were the demands of Henry, it was not a time for the Burgundians to boggle at them. The conqueror was in full march on the undefended capital; they had no forces able to cope with his victorious troops; and the dauphin was watching with the most jealous anxiety this attempt to forestall him in an alliance with the dominant power of England. The dauphin attempted to cut off the bearers of the English king's despatches. The fierce Tannegui du Chastel lay in wait for the earl of Warwick on the road, and made an impetuous attack upon him; but he was repulsed with great loss.

Warwick was received with marked attention. Both Burgundy and Isabella held out every hope of an accommodation; and it was arranged that the kings of England and France, accompanied by Burgundy, Isabella, and Catherine, on the part of France, and the dukes of Clarence and Gloucester on that of England, should meet on the banks of the Seine, near Meulan. The rendezvous of the French court was to be at Pontoise, on the Oise; and that of the English one at Mantes. The time fixed was the 30th of May. The ground selected for the conference was a square, one side of which was washed by the Seine, and the other three were enclosed by a strong ditch and palisades. Two magnificent pavilions were erected for the two kings, and between them was a third, which was to be the place of conference. All these pavilions were of green and blue, worked with gold; and from the centre of the tent of conference rose a tall flagstaff. There were opposite entrances, well defended by barriers; and the ground before the entrance on the right was allotted to the attendants of Henry, that before the entrance on the left to the attendants of the French court.

At the hour appointed the two cavalcades were seen approaching from the opposite quarters; each attended by banners, by bands of music, and about a thousand men-at-arms. After the principal persons had taken possession of their respective tents, at the concerted signal of trumpets and clarions, the king of England and the queen of France left their tents at the same moment, and advanced into the central ground towards each other with an air of great ceremony and dignity. It was found that the poor king of France was unable to present himself, as it was alleged, from indisposition; but the queen was followed by the princess Catherine and the duke of Burgundy; Henry by his two brothers, the dukes of Clarence and Gloucester, and the earl of Warwick.

Henry was at this time in the flower of his prime; one of the most handsome, graceful, and accomplished men in Europe. Catherine, his proposed bride, was, notwithstanding the long nose and peculiar features of the House of Valois, reputed to be one of the handsomest women of the age. Henry found her even to surpass her picture; and it was well known that Catherine had set her resolve on being the queen of England. Under these circumstances Henry advanced with marked respect towards the queen, bowed profoundly, and then embraced and kissed her; repeating the same royal compliment to the princess. He then gave his hand to Isabella, and conducted her into the tent of conference, whither they were followed by the immediate princely members of the conference. Henry took his place directly opposite to the queen and Catherine; the fair damsel being carefully arrayed to produce the most striking effect. She wore an arched crown, and a veil, trimmed on each side with ermine, which reached to the shoulders. She had on a mantle of regal form, beneath which appeared a close-fitting gown, tight to the throat, and with a strip of ermine passing down the front, studded with diamonds. Henry was visibly struck with the charms of the princess; and this, no doubt, was the grand achievement of this opening conference. For the rest, the earl of Warwick, as secretary or president of the conference, delivered a long speech in French, which chiefly related to the mode in which the business was to be conducted, and the topics to be discussed. These formalities settled, the parties adjourned for a couple of days, and each returned as they had come to their respective camps.

At the second meeting Henry looked in vain for the princess. The wily old mother, deeply versed in every scheme and practice of intrigue, had satisfied herself of the effect produced by her daughter on the young king, and she now studiously kept her out of sight, as a means of exciting his impatience, and inducing him to lower his demands. In vain. Chagrined as Henry obviously was, this chagrin only made him the more obstinate and exigeant. He now presented his demands in writing, abating not one item of all that he had at first insisted upon. These were, first and foremost, the hand of the princess; then the full possession of Normandy, with all his other conquests, in addition to the territories ceded by the peace of Bretigni; the whole to be held in absolute independence of the crown of France.

The queen and Burgundy demanded four days to deliberate on these sweeping requisitions. When they met again they made no decided objection to them, but they brought forward a string of counter-claims, eight in number, regarding the relinquishment of these territories, the amount of dowry, and the payment of debts. Henry began to flatter himself that the necessities of the French court were in reality about to compel them to concede to his extraordinary terms. He set himself earnestly to work to meet these objections, to modify, and even to contract, in some degree, his demands. But he was not long in perceiving that no progress was made. Difficulties were started at each conference, which were seized upon to seek further consultation, further explanations; and he perceived at the end of a month that only seven meetings had been held, between each of which the intervals were growing longer and longer. The princess, in spite of his inquiries, was never again permitted to appear, and the indignant monarch at length broke out in wrathful language to Burgundy, the only person now sent to the conference, saying—"I tell you, fair cousin, that we *will* have the daughter of your king to wife, and we will have her on our own terms, or we will drive both him and you out of this kingdom."

The astute Burgundy replied, "Sire, you are pleased to say so; but I make no doubt that, before you have succeeded in driving us out, you will be heartily tired."

All this denoted that a new game was playing behind the scenes. The fact was, that the dauphin and the Armagnacs had become greatly alarmed at the apparent progress making towards an alliance between the royal party and

Henry of England. If it succeeded they were to be crushed. Every engine was instantly put in motion to defeat this object. Overtures for reconciliation were made to Burgundy and the queen; means had been found to purchase the interest of an artful and abandoned woman, a Madame de Giac, the mistress of Burgundy, who, attended by several of the leaders of the Armagnac party, had been going to and fro between the dauphin's retreat and Pontoise. It was represented that it was far better for the French princes to arrange their own differences than to admit the great enemy of the nation, who would only cajole one party in order to destroy both. Accordingly, when Henry, determined to dally no longer, insisted on a final meeting, he went to the tent of conference at the day and hour appointed, and found—nobody. The queen, Burgundy, and the dauphin, had patched up a reconciliation, and dropped the mask unceremoniously at the feet of the insulted king of England. The reconciled princes met on the road at Poilly-le-Fort, and there, with all outward signs of affection, embraced and vowed eternal amity for the good of France.

The indignation and chagrin of Henry may be imagined. Independently of the promised bride, and sovereignty over a vast portion of France, being thus rudely snatched from him, his position was by no means encouraging. He had only about twenty-five thousand men to enable him to hold his conquests and to pursue them to completion. Whilst Burgundy and the dauphin were uniting all the power of France to oppose him, his own subjects at home were beginning to grumble at the expenditure of the war; and as they saw it likely to succeed in reducing France, to look with dismay on such a result as likely to remove the seat of government to Paris, and make a province of England. The Scots, he found, were at the same time entering into treaty with the dauphin against him, and the kings of Castile and Arragon had already fitted out a great armament, with which they scoured the coasts of Guienne and menaced Bayonne.

The French were in ecstacies of delight at the turn which affairs had taken; in every quarter of the kingdom vigorous efforts were making to take advantage of it, and the army of Henry was proportionably depressed.

But Henry, though, in addition to this insulting display of the perfidy of his enemies, his treasury was very low, never for a moment suffered an air of doubt or despondency to shade his countenance, much less an expression of it to escape him. He immediately ordered his army to advance on Paris, crossed the Seine, fell on the town of Pontoise, and took it. The leaders of the Burgundian party, after accomplishing their agreement with the dauphin, had quitted it, and Burgundy himself was at St. Denis; but even there he did not deem himself safe, and hastily retreated to Troyes, carrying the poor king of France with him.

Henry had recruited his coffers for the present by the discovery of a grand hoard which Lisle Adam had accumulated from the plunder of the Armagnacs during the late massacre. St. Denis was left by Burgundy in charge of Marshal Chastellue, whose rude and debauched soldiers expelled the monks of the celebrated abbey, and took up their quarters there with their lewd women. The people were greatly enraged. They exclaimed, "Are these the fruits of the union of our rulers? What could the English do worse?" and they began to call to mind that when Burgundy and the dauphin proclaimed their reconciliation there fell a fierce tempest, in which the thunder and lightning were of a terrible and ominous kind.

Meantime the victorious troops of Henry appeared before the very gates of the capital, which was left almost wholly destitute of soldiers, and must soon fall into the hands of the enemy if not relieved. The English beat up the whole neighbourhood, and seized all the supplies which should have entered the city, where famine and fever were the only reigning powers. So far from any real union having taken place betwixt the Burgundians and the dauphin, they were paralysed by the rapid pursuit of Henry, and were too conscious of their own internal hatred and treachery to approach each other. Two months had already elapsed since the much-vaunted union, and Burgundy was still unavailingly entreating the dauphin to join his father's council at Troyes, and the dauphin recommending Burgundy and the queen to meet him at Montereau-sur-Yonne. As neither would move, the influence of Madame de Giac was again employed, who succeeded in prevailing on the duke to go as far as Bray-sur-Seine, only two leagues from Montereau. Having succeeded so far, fitting instruments were then chosen to induce the unfortunate Burgundy to proceed to Montereau to an interview with the dauphin, for that base prince would not budge a step out of his safe quarters to bring about this necessary interview. The notorious Tannegui du Chastel was set to complete the work of the equally notorious Madame de Giac. He took with him some companions of his own stamp, and with them the bishop of Valence, whose brother, the bishop of Langres, either a weak dupe, or a traitor inferior to none of them, was with the duke.

This ominous deputation used all their influence to persuade the duke to meet the dauphin, for a conference of their affairs at this pressing crisis, on the bridge of Montereau, not requiring him to advance into the town. The duke knew the character both of the dauphin and of those about him; and could not expel from his memory his own murder of the duke of Orleans twelve years before. These deadly suspicions of each other, based on too much well-grounded experience of each other's utter destitution of honour, did not augur much blessing to the country from their co-operation. When all arguments and protestations proved incapable of moving the duke, recourse was once more had to the influence of Madame de Giac, and the all-powerful mistress won from him the fatal consent to the meeting on the 10th of September.

Every apparent precaution was taken for the peace of the interview and the security of the leaders. Tannegui du Chastel, on the day previous to the meeting, took an oath from the followers of the duke to observe strictly the alliance pledged between the parties, and Burgundy sent the husband of Madame de Giac and another of his officers to impose the same oath on the followers of the dauphin. But no precautions or formalities can bind men without honour or principle, and when the duke was himself ready to go, his most experienced friends strongly dissuaded him from it, reminding him that around the dauphin were his most deadly enemies. Whatever might be his own internal feelings, Burgundy now appeared resolved to go. He talked of the great advantages to be obtained by gaining the command of the brave captains and men in the service of the dauphin, and boasted that once united, it would soon be seen which was the better man, "Hannotin of

Flanders," a nickname given him by his Flemish subjects, or "Henry of Lancaster."

His astrologer declared that if he went he would never return, and at the moment of starting his friends once more crowded round him, and urged him to give up the hazardous enterprise. Resisting, if not despising these warnings, the doomed duke rode away, attended by four hundred men-at-arms.

On approaching the town, Burgundy sent to announce to the dauphin his arrival, when he was speedily attended by Tannegui du Chastel, who brought him from the dauphin the most solemn assurances, "on the word of a prince," that no injury should be offered to him or his. It was agreed that he should take only ten knights with him, and that the dauphin should only bring the same number on his side. The meeting was to take place on the bridge, which was to be guarded at the end by which he entered by his own troops, and at the other by those of the dauphin. Before proceeding, the duke learned that three barriers were drawn across the bridge with a gate in each; this appeared to excite his suspicion, and at this moment one of his valets, who had been into the castle to make preparations for the reception of the duke and his train, came in haste and warned him not to go upon the bridge, as he would assuredly be slain or taken prisoner. On this the duke, turning to Tannegui, said, "How is this? You have pledged your honour for our safety, but do you say true?" The traitor swore he would die himself rather than permit any injury to the duke, and the victim went on.

Yet again, as he had dismounted, and was walking to the bridge, another of his servants rushed up and implored him to remain, for he had seen throngs of armed men collecting on the other side of the river. On this the duke paused, and sent forward the Sieur de Giac to see if it were so, but the false man reported that the whole was a fiction; and Tannegui urged the duke to make haste, for his master had been waiting for him more than an hour. This decided the matter; the duke hurried forward, and no sooner had he passed the first gate on the bridge with his attendants, than it was closed and secured behind him, and so the second. Once more the suspicions of the duke being roused, he laid his hand on Tannegui, and said, "Here is what I trust in." It was a deadly trust. "Let us hasten," said Tannegui, "to my lord the dauphin." They pushed forward towards the next barrier, where the dauphin was standing, and on the duke kneeling with his velvet cap in his hand, he was suddenly struck down from behind by the villain who had lured him on by every sacred assurance. He was speedily despatched; one of his followers, the sieur de Navailles, was killed also by Tannegui as he attempted to defend his master. The lord of Neuchatel darted away, sprang over the barriers, and escaped; the rest of the attendants were surrounded, overpowered, and seized. While this was going on, the soldiers of the dauphin, of whom Burgundy had been warned by his faithful servants, rushed from their hiding-place, scoured over the bridge, and fell upon the duke's followers. These, thus taken by surprise, fled, and got back to Bray.

Nothing could demonstrate the dreadful state of moral turpitude in France at this period more clearly than this studied and most impolitic murder. At the very moment when the most imminent danger to the country from foreign invasion called upon the princes to put forth all their energies for its defence, to forget all past differences, and, in fact, everything but the national welfare, these wretched princes thus deliberately sought each other's lives, and stabbed their country through their party antagonists.

The savage troops of the dauphin stripped the body of the duke of everything of value, and would have thrown it into the river, but a priest resisted their design, and had it conveyed to the church of Montereau. The horror which this most detestable deed excited throughout France, familiar as it was with crimes and tragedies, was intense. One burst of execration was heard throughout the country against the dauphin. That a young man of seventeen could stand calmly and see so vile a murder perpetrated—a murder which, it was plain, had been planned in his own councils, promised but a gloomy future to France. The people vowed to renounce all allegiance to him, or regard for his power. The Parisians in particular swore vengeance on him and his accomplices. They demanded a truce of the English, sent in all haste for the count of Charolais, the son of their murdered leader, and demanded immediate alliance with the English, as the most certain means of exterminating the diabolical faction of the dauphin.

This storm of indignant contempt aroused the dauphin to vindicate his concern in the affair. He issued a proclamation declaring that the duke of Burgundy had made an attempt upon his, the dauphin's life, and had been slain by his attendants in defence of their prince. But this was so notoriously false that it only deepened the scorn of the public against him; and his more honest followers went about boasting of the deed as a grand stratagem and a truly glorious exploit.

Meantime, Philip, the new duke of Burgundy, afterwards so well known by the title of Philip the Good, received the news of his father's assassination at Ghent, and immediately set out to take vengeance for it. He was married to a sister of the dauphin, and exclaimed bluntly, on learning the bloody fact, "Michelle, your brother has murdered my father!" The duke had been very popular with his Flemish subjects, and with one voice they vowed to support his heir in punishing to the utmost the assassins. At Arras the new duke was met by deputations from Isabella, from the city of Paris, and from his own Burgundian subjects, all offering alliance and support in his righteous work of retribution.

The duke at once made overtures to Henry of England, as the certain means of crushing the dauphin and his furious partisans. Henry proposed, as the price of his co-operation, the hand of the princess Catherine, that he should be announced as regent of the kingdom, and as the successor to Charles, setting wholly aside the dauphin. These terms were at once accepted, placing Henry at the height of his ambition, for nothing was too dear for the vengeance required. Within two weeks these preliminaries were signed, but the minor points occupied five months, and, in fact, were the business of the whole winter. These were, that Henry should settle on Catherine twenty thousand nobles, the usual income of an English queen. That during his regency he should govern with the advice of a council of Frenchmen; lay aside the title of king of France during the present king's life; should re-annex Normandy to the crown of France on ascending the throne, and conquer the territories held by the dauphin for the benefit of the king, his father. He was bound to preserve

the parliaments, and nobles, the charters of all cities, and the liberties and privileges of all classes of subjects, as they then existed; and to administer justice according to the laws and customs of the realm.

It was, moreover, stipulated between Henry and the duke of Burgundy, that the duke of Bedford, one of the king's brothers, should marry a sister of Burgundy; that together the king and the duke should pursue the dauphin and the other murderers; and that Henry should on no account allow the dauphin to go out of his hands, if he took him, without the consent of the duke. Besides this, Henry was to settle on Burgundy and his duchess, Michelle, lands in France of the annual value of twenty thousand livres.

Accompanied by sixteen thousand men-at-arms, Henry entered Troyes, where the French court was, on the 30th of May, 1419, and the next day "the perpetual peace" was ratified by Isabella and Philip of Burgundy as the commissioners of Charles. The treaty was accepted with the most apparent alacrity and unanimity by the parliament, the nobles, the heads of the church, the municipality, and all the corporate bodies of Paris. The highest eulogiums were pronounced by the government authorities on Henry. He was declared, in addresses to the public bodies, to be a most wise and virtuous prince, *a lover of peace* and justice; a prince who maintained the most admirable discipline in his army, driving thence all lewd women, and protecting the women and the poor of the country from injury and insult; that he was a fast friend of the church and of learning. Equal laudation was bestowed on his piety and the graces of his person. In short, there was no virtue and no advantage which they did not attribute to him; and though much of this was true, the whole had such an air of the sycophancy of an unprincipled court, as deprived it of any real value. Under all this yet lurked the feeling, especially in the people, that Henry was still a foreigner, and that France had ceased to be an independent country.

The young monarch was introduced to his intended bride, whom he found enthroned with her mother in the church of Notre Dame. Henry appeared, as became his warrior character, in a magnificent suit of burnished armour, and instead of a plume he wore in his helmet a fox's tail, ornamented with precious stones. This same fox's tail he had had carried on a spear before him when he entered Rouen as conqueror, from what whim or circumstance no historian has satisfactorily stated. The queen apologised for the absence of the king on account of his infirm health; but probably the real cause was that he had not nerve enough to go through the duty of depriving his own son of the succession.

Henry conducted the queen and princess to the high altar, and the young couple were there affianced, and "on the 3rd of June, Trinity Sunday," says Monstrelet, "the king of England wedded the lady Catherine, at Troyes, in the parish church, near which he lodged. Great pomp and magnificence were displayed by him and his princes, as if he had been king of the whole world." The archbishop of Sens performed the ceremony, and afterwards went at the head of a procession to bless the nuptial bed, carrying to the bedside of the royal pair wine and soup, according to an old custom in the royal family, which Henry had courtesy enough to comply with. The next day he gave a splendid entertainment, where, the knights of both nations preparing a series of tournaments in honour of the marriage, Henry, continues Monstrelet, said, "I pray my lord the king to permit, and I command his servants and mine to be all ready by to-morrow morning to go and lay siege to Sens, wherein are our enemies. There every man may have jousting and tourneying enough, and may give proof of his prowess; for there is no finer prowess than that of doing justice on the wicked, in order that poor people may breathe and live."

The concluding sentiment of this royal address is very noble, and the glory of it was, that in Henry, as we have already stated, it was the genuine sentiment and practice of his life. In all his campaigns he protected the poor and defenceless.

On the second day after his marriage he accordingly set out on his march to Sens, carrying his young queen with him. In two days Sens opened its gates, and the king and queen entered it in great state. The archbishop of Sens, who married him, had been expelled from his diocese by the Armagnacs, and Henry had the pleasure of reinstating him, which he did in this graceful manner: — "Now, Monseigneur Archévesque, we are quits; you gave me my wife the other day, and I this day restore you to yours."

From Sens he marched upon Montereau, accompanied by the duke of Burgundy, who was particularly anxious to reduce and punish the governor, who had assisted at the murder of his father. Montereau made a desperate, but not a long resistance. During this siege, Henry's bride resided with her father and mother and their court at Bray-sur-Seine, where Henry visited them.

On entering the town, the first care of the duke of Burgundy was to visit the tomb of his father. The poor women of the place showed him the way, and the next day he caused the grave to be opened, and gazed in horror and indignation on the mangled corpse. The body was taken out and removed to the family mausoleum at Dijon, the capital of Burgundy, and the body of the bastard of Croy, who had just been slain in the siege, was placed in the vacant grave. The castle of Montereau still held out, and here Henry gave an example of one of his occasional acts of severity. As the governor was not only immovable, but insulted his herald who was sent to summon him to surrender, Henry brought before the castle some of the Armagnac prisoners, whom he had taken in the town, and declared that he would hang them up there if De Guitry, the governor, would not yield. No notice was taken of the threat, and Henry proceeded to erect gibbets: still the governor was unmoved, though the prisoners knelt down on the edge of the castle moat, and implored him to open his gates and save their lives, as it was clear he could not hold out long. The governor was as impassable as his walls; the threat of Henry was carried into execution, and the poor fellows having been sacrificed to his obstinacy, in eight days afterwards the governor flung open his gates.

From Montereau the united forces of England and France proceeded to Villeneuve-le-Roy, and thence to Melun, which resisted all their efforts for four months. The dauphin had escaped into Languedoc, where he joined the young count Armagnac, who had a strong party there. But Barbazan, the governor of Melun, was one of the men suspected of being engaged in the murder of the duke of Burgundy, and the present duke was eager to secure him and other of his accomplices. Henry, therefore, excepted in the terms of capitulation all such as were participators in the guilt of

that deed; but, on surrender, he interceded for Barbazan, and saved his life.

During this obstinate siege, which continued till the 18th of November, the court resided at Corbeil, where the poor old king of France was accustomed to have his melancholy soothed by the fine military band of his English son-in-law—the first expressly mentioned in history. The siege over, the two courts and all their attendants returned in a species of triumph to Paris. Henry and his father-in-law went first, as a matter of precaution, and made their entry into the city accompanied by a strong body of troops. The place was in a state of absolute starvation—to such a condition had the protracted civil war and the many massacres and *emeutes* which had taken place within and around its walls reduced it. Children were running through the streets in the agonies of famine, and old and young were actually perishing on the pavement. Yet, amid all its horrors and miseries, this strange capital put on an air of high rejoicing. The streets and houses were hung with tapestry and gay carpets, and if there was little to eat, the conduits were made to run with wine. The entrance of the two kings side by side was something like the entrance of Saul and David into Jerusalem. The acclamations of the multitude were chiefly directed towards the hero of Azincourt. At his sight the people seemed to think themselves almost in possession of the wealth and the fat beeves of England. The principal citizens appeared wearing the red cross, the badge of the English; and the clergy in solemn procession chanted, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." The next day the two queens made their entrée amid similar pageants and acclamations.

Charles summoned the three estates of the kingdom, and explained to them in a long speech the reasons which had induced him to make "a final and perpetual peace with his dear son, the king of England." The assembly gave its unanimous approbation to the treaty, and after that the duke of Burgundy, apparelled in deep mourning, appeared before them, and demanded justice on the assassins of his father. The king pronounced judgment against them, as guilty of high treason, and they were proclaimed incapable of holding any office or property, their vassals, at the same time, being absolved from all their oaths of fealty and obligations of service. The dauphin was mentioned as Charles, calling himself dauphin; but he was not directly implicated as the author or abettor of the crime.

At this assembly Isabella was also proclaimed regent of France during the absence of Henry, who now proceeded to England, there to introduce his queen to his subjects and to see her crowned. The whole of this journey and the coronation were like the ovation of an ancient conqueror. After spending their Christmas at Paris, Henry and his young queen set out at the head of six thousand men, commanded by the duke of Bedford. They were received with great festivity at the different towns on their way; and on the 1st of February they left Calais, and landed at Dover, where, according to Monstrelet, "Catherine was received as if she had been an angel of God." The whole reception of the young conqueror and his beautiful bride was of the most enthusiastic kind. They proceeded first to Eltham, and thence after due rest to London, where Catherine was crowned with high state, on the 24th of February.

Armour of Fifteenth Century. (Interior View of the Great Hall, Brougham Hall, Westmoreland.)

She was conducted on foot from Westminster palace to the abbey by two bishops; "and after the coronation was ended," says Holinshed, "queen Catherine was conveyed into the great hall of Westminster, and there sate at dinner. Upon her right hand sat, at the end of the table, the archbishop of Canterbury and cardinal Beaufort. Upon

ASSASSINATION OF THE DUKE OF BURGUNDY. (See page 550.)

the left hand of the queen sat James I., king of Scotland, under his canopy, who was served with messes in covered silver dishes, but after the aforesaid bishops. By the king of Scots sat the duchess of York and the countess of Huntingdon. The countess of Kent sat under the table, at the queen's feet, holding a napkin. The earl of Marche, holding the queen's sceptre in his hand, kneeled on the steps of the daïs at her right side; the earl-marshal, holding her other sceptre, knelt on her left. The duke of Gloucester was that day overseer of the feast, and stood before queen Catherine bare-headed. Sir Richard Neville was her cupbearer; Sir James Stuart, server; the lord Clifford pantler, in the earl of Warwick's stead; the lord Grey of Ruthin was her napere; and the lord Audley her almoner, instead of the duke of Cambridge."

In such proud royalty did the hero of Azincourt crown his queen, a subject king sitting at table at once as captive and guest; and the circumstance seems to have made its due impression on the daughter of the house of Valois, for it is stated that the only instance of active benevolence ever recorded of Catherine was now exhibited in favour of the king of Scots. He had been at this court a captive from his boyhood. Catherine engaged Henry to promise him his liberation on condition that he should bear arms under him in the succeeding campaign in France. She did more—she took in hand the love-suit of the young poet-king, and Stowe assures us that James of Scotland was affianced to the beautiful Joanna Beaufort before the festival of Catherine's coronation ended.

After the coronation the royal pair made a progress northward as far as the shrine of St. John of Beverley. They celebrated the spring festival at Leicester, and advanced, visiting the shrine of every saint on their way. The object of Henry was to prepare his subjects for the extraordinary demands he was about to make upon them for the completion of his French conquests. Yet, in one respect, his conduct was not calculated to render him popular. He was so assiduous in his devotions to the saints, and so severe in his suppression of the writings of the Lollards against the clergy, that he obtained from the reformers the name of the "Prince of the Priests." In another respect, however, his conduct was more palatable. He harangued the corporation of every town on his way, and introducing to the delighted officials his fair young queen as a proof of the standing he had gained in France, he exerted all his eloquence to make them sensible of the money and the troops which he should require to accomplish this great object. He did not hesitate to carry his wife to the castle of Pontefract, so notorious as the scene of his father's murder of Richard II., and where he himself now kept confined his brother-in-law, the poet-duke of Orleans, captured at the battle of Azincourt.

But here Henry's gay progress was cut short by the disastrous news of the defeat of his troops in France at the battle of Beaujé. Henry had left his brother, the duke of Clarence, in command of his forces in Normandy, and Clarence, intending to strike a blow at the power of the dauphin in Anjou, marched into that country, and fell in not only with the Armagnacs, but with a body of six or seven thousand auxiliary Scots, near the town of Beaujé. These Scots had been engaged by the Armagnac party to serve against the English as a fitting counterpart. They were commanded by the earl of Buchan, second son of the duke of Albany, the regent of Scotland. He had under him the earl of Wigton, lord Stuart of Darnley, Sir John Swinton, and other brave officers.

The duke of Clarence, deceived by the false report of some prisoners, hastened to surprise what he considered this inconsiderable body of troops. In his rash haste, and in opposition to the earnest advice of his officers, he left behind him his archers, and thus gave another convincing proof that in that force, and not in his men-at-arms, lay the secret of the English victories. He was assured that the Scots were keeping very indifferent watch and discipline, and made sure of seizing an easy conquest. Having forced the passage of a bridge, Clarence was dashing on at the head of his cavalry, distinguished by a magnificent suit of armour, and a coronet of gold set with jewels, when he was met by the Scottish knights in full charge. Sir John Swinton spurred his horse right upon the duke, and bore him from his saddle with his lance, and the earl of Buchan, as he fell, dashed out his brains with his battle-axe. The archers, however, came up in time to prevent the Scots carrying off the body, and they speedily cleared the field of them with their clothyard shafts. In this encounter the English lost about twelve hundred men, and had three hundred taken prisoners; the Scots and French lost together about one thousand men.

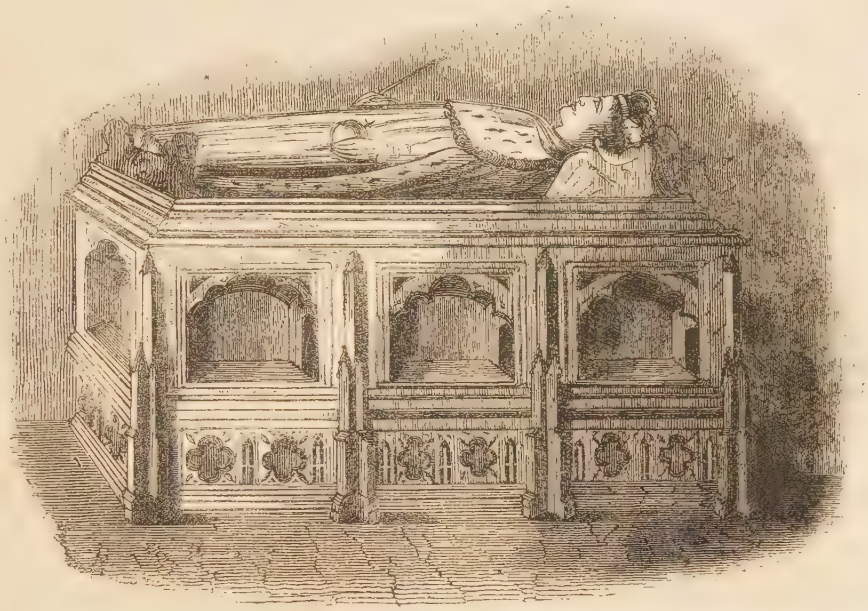
The moral effect of this battle was immense. Though the victory actually remained with the English, yet the impression which the Scots made before the arrival of the archers, and their having killed the royal duke, the brother of the victorious Henry, and the governor of Normandy, and having taken prisoner the earls of Somerset, Dorset, and Huntingdon, seemed to point out the only soldiers in the world capable of contending with the English. Pope Martin V., when this news reached him, exclaimed, "Ha! the Scots are the only antidote to the English!"

The joy of the dauphin's party at this first small gleam of success for many years over the dreaded islanders, was ecstatic. He created the earl of Buchan constable of France, the highest office of the kingdom, and count of Aubigny.

The fame of this exploit on the field of Beaujé, and of the rewards showered in consequence on their countrymen, roused the martial Scots, and they poured over in great numbers into France. The spell of England's invincibility seemed for a moment broken, and enemies began to start up in various quarters. Jacques de Harcourt issued from his castle of Crotoy, in Picardy, and harassed the English both at sea and on shore. Poitou de Saintraille and Vignolles, called La Hire, also infested Picardy. The fickle Parisians, who so lately shouted and carolled on the entrance of Henry into their city, now openly expressed their discontent, and proceeded to such lengths, that the English commander there, the duke of Exeter, was compelled to drive them from the streets with his inimitable archers. The dauphin, taking courage from all these circumstances, began to advance from the south towards the capital.

Henry, greatly chagrined at these events, calculated, if not checked, to add infinitely to the difficulties in the path of his ambition, lost no time in preparing to reach the scene of action. He ordered troops to assemble with all celerity at Dover. He called together parliament and convocation, both of which met his wishes with the greatest alacrity. Parliament ratified at once the treaty of Troyes

and authorised his council to raise loans on its own security. The clergy granted him a tenth. To take a signal vengeance on the Scots, whose valour and the rashness of Cambridge had thus broken in on his triumphs and enjoyments at home, he called on the young king of Scots to fulfil his engagement to serve in France under his banners; the condition being his return to Scotland three months after the termination of the campaign. Henry deemed that by this measure he should not only put Scot against Scot, but should, by having the Scottish king with him, deter any of his subjects from taking arms on the other side, and thus actually fighting against their own monarch. In this hope he was disappointed; but as the Scots had entered the French service without any declaration of war made by Scotland against England, the presence of the Scotish king on his side furnished him with the plea of



Tomb of Henry V. in Westminster Abbey.

treating every Scot who did battle on the other side as a traitor; and he sullied his fair fame when he came into the field by hanging every such Scot as fell into his hands.

Besides having the person of James I. in his army, Henry also prevailed on Archibald, earl Douglas, to engage in his service with two hundred men-at-arms and two hundred foot-soldiers. Earl Douglas had been for some years a prisoner in England in the reign of Henry IV., and he had his causes of discontent with Albany, the regent, who had sent out his son, the earl of Buchan, and the Scots army to aid the dauphin. The estates of the expatriated earl of March, who figured so conspicuously in England in the last reign, had been granted to Douglas; but Albany, without consulting parliament, had recalled March, and restored to him all his forfeited estates. Douglas, therefore, readily took arms against the army of Albany in France. He agreed to serve Henry on the usual terms of pay for his men, and an annuity of two hundred pounds. Besides this, the fact of their young monarch going out with Henry speedily brought to his standard, at Dover, Alexander, lord Forbes, Alexander de Seton, lord of Gordon, Sir William Blair, and other Scottish knights and gentlemen.

Henry saw there collected under his banner a gallant army of four thousand men-at-arms and twenty-four thousand archers. With these he landed at Calais by the 12th of June, sent on twelve hundred men-at-arms by forced marches to Paris, to strengthen the garrison of the duke of Exeter; and followed himself at more leisure. At Montreuil he met the duke of Burgundy, and arranged the plans of action. Burgundy, in consequence, marched into Picardy, attacked and defeated the dauphinites at Mons-en-Vimeu, and took Saintraille and others of their bravest leaders prisoners. This revived the spirit of the royalists, and they speedily reduced various other places in the north-west.

Henry left the army under command of the earl of Dorset, and hastening to Paris, paid a hasty visit to his father-in-law at the Bois de Vincennes. He then joined the army and advanced against Chartres, which was besieged by the dauphin. The siege of Chartres was raised at Henry's approach, Beaugency was next taken, and the dauphin retreated beyond the Loire. Meantime, the king of Scots, to whom Henry had assigned the siege of Dreux, prosecuted his mission with equal zeal and talent, and brought that strong place to capitulate on the 30th of August.

The whole of France, from the north to Paris, and from Paris to the Loire, was almost entirely in the hands of the English and their allies the Burgundians. The dauphin, unable to stand a moment before the superior genius and troops of Henry, fell back successively from post to post, till he took refuge in the well fortified city of Bourges. The troops of Henry had suffered considerably by their rapid marches and from scarcity of provisions. Henry, therefore, quitted the pursuit of the dauphin for a space; the country, from its past calamities, still lying a desert,

and the miserable people perishing of hunger. He sought out sufficiently good quarters for his army, and left them to refresh themselves while he paid a short visit to Paris. He was very soon, however, in the field again; and by the 6th of October had sat down before the city of Meaux on the Marne. He was induced to undertake this siege from the earnest solicitations of the people of Paris. They represented that it was the stronghold of one of the most ferocious monsters who in those fearful times spread horror through afflicted France. This was an old companion of the late count of Armagnac, called the Bastard of Vaurus, who had become so infuriated by the murder of his master, that the whole of mankind hardly seemed sufficient to appease, by death and suffering, his revenge. Meaux was his place of retreat. It was reputed to be one of the very strongest towns of France, about twenty-five miles distant only from Paris. One part of the town in particular, called the Market-place, was deemed impregnable. Sallying forth, ever and anon, from this fortress, the Bastard of Vaurus swept the whole country, and up to the very gates of Paris. He plundered and murdered the poor people of both town and country; and such of the farmers and tradesmen as were worth a ransom, he tied to the tails of his horses and dragged them after him to Meaux. Here he kept them till they were ransomed by their friends, occasionally applying torture to quicken the motions of their families on their behalf. Against the English and the Burgundians his rage and cruelty knew no bounds. He often massacred them on the spot with the most incredible barbarities; but his favourite pastime was to hang them, and all such unlucky wretches as were not redeemed with a good sum, on a great tree outside Meaux, thence called the Oak of Vaurus. This man and his companions became the terror of Paris.

It cost Henry ten weeks to carry the town; and then the monster of Vaurus retired with his garrison to the Market-place, which defied all the efforts of the English and their allies. The siege was carried on with sanguinary fury; no quarter was given on either side. On the 10th of May, 1422, the Market-place was compelled to surrender from absolute famine; though the dauphin had despatched the Sieur d'Affemont to endeavour to throw supplies into this fortress. Affemont was taken prisoner; and the place fell. The Bastard of Vaurus was beheaded, his body hung up on his own oak, and his banner, surmounted with his head, was attached to its highest bough. Three of his chief companions, who had vied with him in their violence and ferocity, were executed with him; and a number of persons suspected of being accessory to the death of the duke of Burgundy, were marched to Paris to take their trials.

Henry had spent seven months in these operations. They had cost him a great number of his brave soldiers, and some of his most tried officers; amongst them the earl of Worcester and lord Clifford, who fell before the walls of Meaux. Sickness swept away many others; but the advantages of the reduction of Meaux were as distinguished as the costs; for it laid all the north of France as far as the Loire, with the exception of Maine, Anjou, and a few castles in Picardy, under his dominion. Whilst he lay before Meaux, however, he received the joyful intelligence of the safe delivery of his queen of a son, who had received his own name; the duke of Bedford, the bishop of Winchester, and Jacqueline, countess of Hainault and Holland, who proved the cause of many misfortunes to the infant prince, being sponsors at his baptism.

One thing, however, troubled his joy on this auspicious event. Henry had probably studied the so-called science of astrology at Oxford, for it was part of the heap of rubbish regarded as real knowledge at that time. On leaving England, therefore, he strictly enjoined Catherine not to lie-in at Windsor, for he had ascertained that the planets cast forward a lowering shadow upon Windsor, in the week when she might expect her confinement. From waywardness, or some other cause, Catherine especially chose as the place of her accouchement the forbidden spot; a conduct which she lived bitterly to rue. On the news being brought to Henry at Meaux, he eagerly demanded where the boy was born, and on being told it was at Windsor, he appeared greatly struck and chagrined, and repeated to his chamberlain, lord Fitzhugh, the following lines:—

> "I, Henry, born at Monmouth,
> Shall small time reign and much get;
> But Henry of Windsor shall long reign, and lose all.
> But as God wills, so be it."

Probably these were sentiments which the king expressed, and that they owe their sibylline form to some chronicler or astrologer of the time. It is certain that Speed, Stowe, Fabyn, and Holinshed concur in saying that the king "prophesied the calamities of Henry VI." The boy was born on the 6th of December, 1421. On hearing of the fall of Meaux, Catherine left her infant to the care of its uncle, the duke of Gloucester, and hastened to join Henry in France. She was escorted by the duke of Bedford and twenty thousand fresh troops, to enable Henry to complete the conquest of her brother and his unhappy country. She landed at Harfleur on the 21st of May, where she was received with great state and rejoicing by numbers of noblemen and gentlemen, who accompanied her on her route to Paris by Rouen to the Bois de Vincennes, where her father's court resided. Henry set out from Meaux to meet her there, and thence the two courts proceeded together to Paris to spend the festival of Whitsuntide.

Catherine appears to have returned to her own country and capital with a very sufficient desire to display her greatness as the queen of England and expectant queen of France, as well as the consort of the most renowned warrior of the age. Her journey had been like a triumph. At every fresh town crowds of the most distinguished people flocked to pay their devoirs and swelled her train. The two courts now entered Paris with studied magnificence, but that of England far eclipsed that of France. The old and imbecile king was become a cipher, the heartless and licentious Isabella was deservedly unpopular, while the youthful sovereigns of conquering England were in the full lustre of their beauty, and surrounded by every evidence of wealth and power. Queen Catherine and her train took possession of the Louvre. Charles and Isabella went to the Hotel de St. Pol. On Whit Sunday Henry gave a superb banquet at the Louvre, when Catherine presided at table in the most gorgeous apparel, and wearing her diadem. All the great princes of France and England were assembled at the table, which was loaded with rich plate and the finest viands and wines. The next day Catherine held an open court, whither flocked all of Paris who had the smallest claim to the entrée, and beheld the king and queen of England sitting enthroned, crowned, and sceptred,

and covered with the accumulated jewels of their dynasty. "King Charles," observed Monstrelet, "had once been as courteous and liberal as any of his predecessors; but now he was discovered seated at a table with his queen, quite forsaken by his nobles, who all flocked to pay their court to his daughter and her husband, at which the people grieved much." It was unquestionably a display of very bad taste and of still less heart, in the fair Catherine of Valois; but in that house there were very few traces of heart, and Henry may be supposed to have fallen thoughtlessly into the vain ostentation of his young queen before her own people. What gave still greater offence was that Catherine had the ermines carried before her coach, as if already actual queen of France. Further, Paris was at this very time the abode of destitution as it concerned the multitude, and the hungry spectators of all this feasting and splendour went away loudly denouncing the meanness of the English sovereigns, who made no distribution of meat to the populace, according to the ancient custom of the French kings.

But in the midst of these gay though unsatisfactory rejoicings, there came a pressing message from the duke of Burgundy to Henry, entreating him to hasten to his assistance against the dauphin. Those sturdy Scots who had made such havoc amongst Henry's troops at Beaujé, were still in the country; and the dauphin, collecting twenty thousand men in the south, had put them under the command of the earl of Buchan, the leader of those troops. They had crossed the Loire, taken La Charité, and proceeded to invest Cosne. At Cosne the dauphin joined Buchan, and the duke of Burgundy, to whom these towns belonged, seeing that his hereditary duchy of Burgundy would next be menaced, was most urgent in his appeal to Henry to fly to his assistance.

Henry, in the midst of his glory and his good fortune, had for some time felt the approaches of an illness that no exercise in the field or festivities in the city enabled him to shake off. In vain he resisted the insidious disease. It seized relentlessly on his constitution, and defied all the science of his physicians. At the call of Burgundy, however, he roused himself, and set out from Paris at the end of July. Cosne had agreed to surrender if not relieved by the 16th of August, and Henry was impatient to come up in time. But a greater conqueror than himself was now come out against him. Death had laid his hand upon him; and he had only reached Senlis, about twenty-eight miles from Paris, when he was seized with such debility that he was obliged to be carried thence to Corbeil in a horse-litter. There, spite of his determined attempt to go on, his malady assumed such feverish and alarming symptoms that he was compelled to give up, and surrender the command of the army to the duke of Bedford. He had left the queen at Senlis, but she was now returned to Bois de Vincennes, and thither he caused himself to be conveyed by water.

In the castle of Vincennes, which had witn ssed many a strange passage in the history of France and her sovereigns, the great conqueror now lay helpless and hopeless of life, tended by Catherine and her mother. His very name had scared once more the dauphin from the field. No sooner did he hear that Henry was on the way, than he hastily abandoned the siege of Cosne, re-crossed the Loire, and threw himself again into Bourges. The duke of Bedford, who found no enemy in the field, was preparing to cross the Loire in pursuit of him, when he was recalled to the dying bed of his royal brother.

Henry was just reaching the summit of one of the most brilliant fortunes which ever attended a monarch, when he thus saw it snatched from him by death. He was in the very prime of his existence, being still only thirty-four years of age. He had won the most extraordinary battles, had been ever supported by his people in the most generous and constant manner, was the conqueror of two-thirds of France, and the acknowledged heir to the whole—that grand object of the ambition of the great martial monarchs who had preceded him. His father-in-law was already sinking into the grave, and two more months would have seen him proclaimed sovereign of England and France. He was surrounded by great generals; his royal brothers were his cordial and fast friends; he was the husband of one of the most beautiful princesses of the age, and saw his glories give promise of transmission to his son. He had won the respect of the French by his justice, if not in his claims, at least in his administration, and he was almost worshipped by his own army and nation.

If there ever was a combination of circumstances to make a death-bed hard, and cause the heart to cling tenaciously to life, they were those which surrounded Henry of Monmouth. But never, in the most trying hour of his existence, not even when he contemplated the vast hosts hemming him in on the eve of the great fight of Azincourt, did he display such unbroken firmness. For himself he expressed no anxiety and no regrets; his only solicitude was for his son and successor, still only nine months old. He called to his bedside his brother the duke of Bedford, the earl of Warwick, and others of his lords, and to them he gave the most solemn injunctions to be faithful guardians of their infant sovereign. He expressed no remorse for the blood which he had shed in his wars, unquestionably believing all that he had so often asserted, that he was the chosen instrument of Providence for the chastisement and renovation of France.

To the duke of Bedford he said, "Comfort my dear wife —the most afflicted creature living." He most earnestly recommended, both to him and all his commanders, to cultivate the friendship of the duke of Burgundy; never to make peace with Charles, who called himself dauphin, except on condition of his total renunciation of the crown; never to release the duke of Orleans, or any of the French princes of the blood taken at Azincourt; nor in any way to yield the claims of his son on France. He appointed his brother, the duke of Gloucester, protector in England during his son's minority; and his brother, the duke of Bedford, regent in France, who should avail himself on all occasions of the counsel of the duke of Burgundy. Being assured by his physicians that he had not more than two hours to live, he then sent for his spiritual counsellors; and while they were chanting the seven penitential psalms he stopped them at the verse, "Build thou the walls of Jerusalem," and assured them that when he had completed the settlement of France he had always intended to undertake a crusade. This was precisely what his father had done on his death-bed; and this appeared still a favourite idea of the European princes.

Having thus systematically concluded all his affairs temporal and spiritual, he calmly expired on the last day of August, 1422, amid the sobs and deep grief of all around him.

The cotemporary writer. Titus Livius, who had seen him, thus describes his person :—"In stature he was a little above the middle size; his countenance was beautiful, his neck long, his body slender, and his limbs most elegantly formed. He was very strong; and so swift, that, with two companions, without either dogs or missive weapons, he caught a doe, one of the fleetest animals. He was a lover of music, and excelled in all martial and manly exercises."

is only necessary to recollect the carnage and devastation which they carried everywhere in their march, the towns they relentlessly sacked, the lands and villages which they burnt and plundered, to perceive how far Henry exceeded them both in feeling and sound policy. They died detested by those whose cities and fields they had ruthlessly destroyed; Henry was remembered with affection for his protection to the invaded and especially to women, and to

Paris in the 15th Century.

The qualities of his mind were in no respect inferior to those of his body. He was generous, aspiring, undaunted, and far-seeing. He has been compared disingenuously, by some historians, with the two great Edwards, but in nothing was he their inferior. In a far shorter career, he equalled, if he did not surpass, their military genius. And in all that related to humanity of conduct while prosecuting his wars, he was immeasurably their superior. It

the weak and aged. He exhibited instances of partial severity; theirs was general, and continued to the last.

Towards his own subjects he was constitutionally just. He was, as we have said, especially of a military genius, a warrior by ambition and from impulse. Martial fame was his grand fascination, and his imagination coloured all his aspirations, and justified to himself all his enterprises. He believed that the path of his honour was, at the same time,

FUNERAL PROCESSION OF HENRY V. (See page 560.)

the path of duty; and, contented with the liberal supplies of his subjects, he made no attempt at encroachment on their rights. No monarch ever more fully realised the beau-ideal of a great prince to his subjects, and four centuries have not availed to withdraw from his memory the splendour which his conquests threw around him in his life. There is not a man living who does not feel that he loves the brave and frank Harry, or whose heart does not leap with British pride at the name of Azincourt. And this is not the less so because we all know perfectly now that the brilliant deeds which he, as well as the Edwards, did on the soil of France, did and could yield no lasting advantage to this country beyond that which lies in a high and imperishable prestige.

There was one circumstance in which the death of Henry V. differed greatly from that of many kings mighty and dreaded in their lifetime. His corpse was not abandoned the moment the breath had departed, and what had been a king was only a carcase. There was not a revolting exhibition of the baseness of courtiers, as in the cases of William the Conqueror and Edward III. On the contrary, his officers determined that he should, though dead, depart from France with as much regal state as he entered it. They had the body embalmed, and carried in great ceremony to the church of Notre Dame, where the funeral service was performed with all the pomp that the Catholic church knows so well how to employ on such occasions.

The queen, it appears, was not present at his death, and was kept in ignorance of it for some days. On its being communicated to her, she was attended by some of the nobles to the city of Rouen, and thither the body of the king was carried in solemn procession, and there lay in state for several days. "The body was then laid on a chariot drawn by four noble horses. Just above the dead body they placed a figure made of boiled leather, representing his person as nigh as might be devised, painted curiously to the semblance of a living creature, on whose head was put an imperial diadem of gold and precious stones; on its body a purple robe furred with ermine; in the right hand a sceptre royal; in the left an orb of gold with a cross fixed thereon. And thus adorned was this figure laid in a bed on the same chariot, with the visage uncovered towards the heavens; and the coverture of this bed was of red, beaten with gold; and besides, when the body should pass through any good town, a canopy of marvellous value was borne over it by men of great worship. In this manner he was accompanied by the king of Scots as the chief mourner, and by all the princes, lords, and knights of his house, in vestures of deep mourning. At a distance from the corpse of about two English miles, followed the widow, queen Catherine, right honourably accompanied. The body rested in the church of St. Wolfran, in Abbeville, where masses were sung by the queen's orders for the repose of Henry's soul, from the dawning of morning till the closing of night. The procession moved through Abbeville with increased pomp. The duke of Exeter, the earl of Marche, Sir Louis Robsart, the queen's knight, and many nobles, bore the banners of the saints. The hatchments were carried by twelve renowned captains; and around the bier-car rode four hundred men-at-arms in black armour, their horses barbed black, their lances held with the point downwards. A great company clothed in white, bearing wax-torches, lighted, encompassed the procession. The queen, with a mighty retinue, followed."

Thus this vast procession kept on its way from town to town, through Hesdin, Montreuil, Boulogne, to Calais, where it arrived on the 12th of October, and found vessels ordered by the privy council waiting to convey the corpse and the company over. From Dover the great funeral procession advanced slowly through Canterbury and Rochester to London. On the way it was met by fifteen bishops in their pontifical habits, and by many abbots in their mitres and vestments, and a great assemblage of priests and people. The priests chanted their solemn anthems for the dead all the way from Blackheath and through the streets of London, where they arrived on Martinmas day. Thus they went on to St. Paul's, and, after the obsequies there performed, to Westminster Abbey. All the way every householder stood at his door with a torch in his hand; and all London seemed to follow after. The princes of the family rode in open carriages immediately after the bier, so that their grief might be manifest to all the people, who were greatly edified thereby, and especially by the deep sorrow of the queen. The body was interred near the shrine of the Confessor. The queen had a splendid tomb there erected for him, on which was inscribed that it was done by his queen Catherine. Before it was extended a silver-plated effigy, with the head of solid silver, gilt.

During Henry's reign the long schism which had prevailed in the church was terminated. It had lasted forty years, during which time there were two rival popes; and towards the end of the time three. The emperor Sigismund then set himself to remove this scandal, and by his exertions all the leading governments of Europe were brought to combine for the purpose. At the council of Constance they compelled one pope to resign, and excommunicated the two others; a new one, under the name of Martin V., being elected at the next conclave.

The reign of Henry V. is also remarkable for a fact which demonstrated that the old feudal system was at an end so far as it regarded the constitution of the army. The kings could no longer calculate on the nobles supplying their proper quotas of men. Henry, therefore, in 1415, before setting out for France, empowered commissioners to take in each county a registration of all the free men capable of bearing arms; to divide them into companies, and keep them in a state of discipline, ready to resist any invader. Thus arose a fixed militia, and this left him more at liberty to obtain contracts with powerful barons to serve with their vassals under his banners, or to enlist men. To keep his armies efficient he paid very high wages—two shillings per day to men-at-arms, equal to thirty shillings now; and from six to nine pence per day to archers—equal to from seven to ten shillings now. Yet, notwithstanding this, Henry was never supplied with a force capable of carrying out his designs of permanent conquest, but owed his success rather to the disunion of his enemies. The whole of his royal revenue was only about forty-five thousand pounds—equal in value to about six hundred thousand pounds of our present money.

Henry IV. had never ventured, like the Edwards, to impose taxes without consent of parliament, because he felt the weakness of his title to the throne. But Henry V., whose doubtful claims to the usurped power were forgotten in his fame and his popularity, appeared to grant popular

privileges with a good will, resulting from a more generous nature. The commons complained that their petitions, after being delivered to the king, were so altered by the nobles or the legal advisers of the crown, as often to become laws directly opposite to their intentions; upon which Henry instantly ordained that the commons should in no way be bound by anything which had been put into the laws contrary to their petitions. On the whole, therefore, whether we regard the foreign or the domestic career of Henry V., we may in a great measure concur in the opinion of the historian Henry, that "he was one of the best, bravest, and most fortunate princes that ever wore the diadem of England."

CHAPTER LXXII.

The Reign of Henry VI.—Minority of the King—The Condition of France—The Death of Charles VI.—The War continued against the Dauphin—Prospects, as it regarded the Permanence of the English Power in France—Battle of Crevant—Liberation and Marriage of the King of Scotland—Surrender of Yvry—Battle of Verneuil—The Duke of Gloucester marries Jacqueline of Hainault, and endeavours to possess himself of that Country—Resentment of the Duke of Burgundy, and Withdrawal of the Duke of Brittany from the English Alliance—The Siege of Orleans—The Appearance of Joan of Arc—She raises the Siege of Orleans—Retreat of the English—Jargeau taken by Joan, and the Earl of Suffolk captured—Battle of Patay, and capture of the Lords Talbot, Scales, and Hungerford—Auxerre, Troyes, and Rheims submit to the Maid of Orleans—Charles VII. crowned at Rheims.

Henry VI., on the death of his father, was scarcely nine months old. However prosperous his father had been, and however well fortified he seemed to have left him in the care of his mother and the ability and unity of his uncles, as well as the reverence of the people for their late brilliant king, no one who had studied history, even in the smallest degree, but must have foreseen in the course of so long a minority many troubles, and probably much disaster.

While a strong hand guides the course of government, discordant elements, if they do not sleep, are at least suppressed in their action, often scarcely seem to exist. But that hand once removed, all those elements start into motion. A thousand conflicting interests manifest themselves, and numbers of men are soon found struggling for an eminence which heretofore they had deemed unattainable. By such circumstances how many a minor has been plunged into calamity, and not unfrequently into speedy ruin.

But if this be true of the heir of one kingdom, how much more so must it be of the heir of two—and two such realms as England and France. It would, indeed, have been a miracle if the clashing ambitions of the blood-relations, and of other great men around the infant king's throne, had not produced much trouble and civil conflict. But the prospect of his power in France was still more critical. There he was the nominal heir to a throne of which his father had not lived to obtain possession—of a kingdom not yet entirely subdued by the British arms; a kingdom naturally hostile to an English ruler; a kingdom of proud, sensitive people, who, though they had consented to the ascendency of Henry V., in order to procure some degree of repose, yet had by no means forgotten the haughty and the cruel deeds of the English in their country; above all, a kingdom in which the rightful heir to the throne was still alive,—in fact, had still most devoted adherents; and who presented to their feelings the image of a young prince unjustly and unnaturally excluded from his own great patrimony by an imbecile father and a haughty conqueror.

Though the dauphin had disgusted a large portion of the French by his adherence to the Armagnac faction, which had steeped the capital and the country in the blood of its people; though he was stained by the blood of the murdered Burgundy, and was reputed to be more fond of pleasure and disgraceful companions than of good government and love to his people, still he was their native-born prince. He had fought from his mere boyhood against the island invaders. He was a Frenchman, and the hearts of all Frenchmen turned naturally towards him, notwithstanding his faults, in the spirit of inextinguishable patriotism. It would be his fault if this feeling did not grow, and that the French should come to regard him as the hope of the nation—the hope of its ultimate redemption from the galling yoke of the foreigners.

The effect of these circumstances became first manifest in England. After the interment of Henry V., queen Catherine retired to Windsor with her infant charge, and the parliament proceeded to take measures for the security of the throne during the minority. The nobles during Henry V.'s reign had been held in perfect and respectful subordination by the ability and the high prestige of the king. Parliament had asserted its own, but sought not to encroach on the royal prerogative in the hands of a sovereign who showed no disposition to encroach on the popular rights. But now parliament, and especially the house of peers, showed unmistakable evidence of a consciousness of their augmented authority.

Henry on his death-bed had named the duke of Bedford as regent of France, the duke of Gloucester as regent of England, and the earl of Warwick as guardian of his son. On the arrival of the official information of the king's death, a number of peers and prelates, chiefly members of the royal council, assembled at Westminster, and issued commissions to the judges, sheriffs, and other officers, ordering them to continue in the discharge of their respective functions; and also summoning a parliament to meet on the fifth of November. On the day previous to the meeting of parliament, a committee of peers offered to the duke of Gloucester a commission empowering him, in the king's name and with the consent of the council, to open, conduct, and dissolve the parliament. Gloucester objected to the words, "with the consent of council." He contended that it was an infringement of his own right, the king before his death having named him regent. But the peers insisted that what they did was made necessary by the extreme youth of the king, and Gloucester was obliged to give way.

The parliament immediately on assembling ratified all the acts by which it had been convoked, and entered upon the duty of arranging the form of government for the minority. Gloucester contended that his authority as regent did not depend on the consent of the council, but was the act of the late king himself; and that in no commissions of the late king had any such words as acting by the consent of the council been introduced. But parliament declared the appointment of the late king to be of no force, inasmuch as to make it valid, it required the consent of the three estates. It was also shown that the two last centuries presented three minorities, those of Henry III., Edward III., and Richard II., and in none of them, except in the two first years of Henry III., had the powers of the executive government been committed to a guardian or a regent.

They refused altogether the title of regent, as far as England was concerned, but leaving the duke of Bedford regent of France, they did not even grant to Gloucester the same power under another name in this country. They gave the chief authority to the duke of Bedford as the elder brother, and nominated him not regent, which might sanction the idea of his authority being derived from the crown only, but protector, or guardian of the kingdom. They then appointed Gloucester protector during the duke of Bedford's absence only, making him, as it were, merely deputy-protector, his brother's lieutenant.

They thus completely set aside the arrangement of the late king, and reduced the power of Gloucester to a subordinate degree. They limited it still more by appointing the chancellor treasurer and keeper of the privy seal, and sixteen members of council, with the duke of Bedford as president. In the absence of the duke, Gloucester was to officiate as president. The care of the young king was committed to the earl of Warwick, and his education to Henry Beaufort, bishop of Winchester, afterwards the famous Cardinal Beaufort. Beaufort was one of the three natural sons of John of Gaunt by Catherine Swynford who were legitimated by royal patent, and had taken the name of Beaufort from the castle of Beaufort in France, where they were born. The bishop was thus half-brother to Henry IV., and consequently great uncle to the infant king. Both as a churchman, and as belonging to a family which, though of royal blood, could have no pretensions to the crown, parliament deemed him a fitting person to enjoy that important office.

These arrangements must have been very mortifying to the duke of Gloucester; but being proposed by the peers, and fully consented to by the commons, he acquiesced in them with the best grace he could. The following liberal salaries were voted to the members of council:

	£	s.	d.
To the Protector, per annum . . .	5,333	6	8
,, Dukes and archbishops . . .	200	0	0
,, Bishops and earls	133	6	8
,, Barons and bannerets	100	0	0
,, Esquires	30	0	0

Having also enacted regulations for the proceedings of the council, and continued the tonnage and poundage and the duties on wool for two years, the parliament was dissolved.

In France the duke of Bedford appeared, for the moment, all powerful. He had a reputation for ability, both in the council and the field, second only to his late brother the king. He had had great experience under the consummate command of Henry V., and was everywhere regarded as a man of the highest prudence, probity, bravery, and liberality. The authority which the English parliament had conferred on him, adding even to that designed by the late king, raised him still more in public opinion. He had now the whole power of England in his hands. His troops had long been inured to victory, and he was surrounded by a number of the most distinguished generals that the nation had ever produced. There were the earls of Somerset, Warwick, Suffolk, Salisbury, and Arundel, the brave Talbot, and Sir John Fastolfe. He was master of three-fourths of France, was in possession of its capital, and was in close alliance with the most powerful prince of France, the duke of Burgundy. Following out the dying advice of the late king, he offered to Burgundy the regency of France, but that prince declined it, and by the advice of his council, Charles VI. conferred it on Bedford.

While everything thus appeared to favour the English interest, the dauphin's affairs were eminently discouraging. He possessed but a fragment of France in the south, and his officers were more celebrated for their ferocity than their military skill. He was only about twenty years of age, and had the character of an indolent and dissipated prince. His wife, Mary of Anjou, was a woman of great beauty and virtue, but she was neglected by him for his mistress, Agnes Sorel, to whom he was blindly devoted. The duke of Burgundy, the most powerful prince of the blood, was his mortal enemy, on account of the assassination of his father. The other great princes of his family, who should now have given strength to his party, the dukes of Orleans and Bourbon, the counts of Eu, Angoulême, and Vendome, had been prisoners in England ever since the fatal day of Azincourt. The duke of Brittany, one of the greatest vassals of his crown, had now deserted him and gone over to Burgundy and England. No other prince or noble had joined his standard, nor any foreign nation except the Scots.

But in the very depth of these depressing circumstances a sudden light sprung up. His father, Charles VI., died on the 21st of October, 1422, at his palace of St. Pol in Paris. This event was not likely to afflict the dauphin greatly. The Valois had shown a wonderful callousness to their natural ties, and for years the dauphin had been engaged in active war with both his parents, and had been formally renounced and disinherited by them. In a political point of view the death of the king was of the very highest advantage to him. It cut at once a powerful bond of obedience to the English. Many of the French nobility, while ostensibly supporting the English, did it only out of deference to their own monarch. But that monarch once gone, they could not for a moment think of conferring their allegiance on a mere child and a foreigner when the true heir was at hand. In all French hearts, more or less, whenever or however situated, these sentiments began actively to stir; and the death of Charles VI., instead of seating Henry of Windsor on the throne of France, gave a shock to the English power there from which it never recovered.

The dauphin, when the news of his father's death reached him, was in Auvergne; and his knights at once conducted him to a little chapel near, erected the banner of France, and proclaimed him king. They then marched to Poictiers, where, Rheims being in the hands of his enemies, he was solemnly crowned and proclaimed as Charles VII.

Even in Paris there was some attempt at rising in his favour, as in England there had been a rising on the borders of Wales in favour of the old line; but, in both instances, the power of Henry's authorities crushed the movement, and all for the time remained quiet.

In Paris there appeared for some time after the king's death to prevail a sort of interregnum. Henry VI. was not proclaimed as king of France, and the parliament of Paris ignored his name in its acts; but, on receiving his full authority from England, and hearing what the dauphin was doing, the duke of Bedford ordered Henry to be proclaimed. He moreover summoned a great assembly, consisting of the parliament, the archbishop and his clergy, the university, the chief military officers, the magistrates and

principal burgesses of the city, who all swore allegiance to Henry VI., king of England and king of France. The same ceremony took place throughout all the provinces of France which were subject to the English and Burgundians. Thus France had two monarchs, and it remained to be decided by the sword which of them should prevail. On the side of Henry of England was military and territorial power; on that of Charles VII., the less conspicuous, but far more potent, force of nature and of patriotism.

The duke of Bedford exerted himself to strengthen the English alliance to the utmost. To bind to him more securely the powerful duke of Burgundy, he concluded the marriage with the princess Anne, the youngest sister of the duke, which had been contracted at the treaty of Arras. On the 17th of April, 1423, he met at Amiens, Burgundy, the duke of Brittany, and his brother Arthur, earl of Richemont. Bedford knew that, next to Burgundy, the duke of Brittany was the most desirable ally of the English. The provinces of France now in possession of England lay between the territories of those two princes, and must always be exposed to their attacks, when not in friendship with them. The duke of Brittany had already acceded to the treaty of Troyes in resentment towards the government of Charles VI., and had done homage to Henry V., as the acknowledged heir to the throne. But Bedford sought to bind him by fresh ties. His brother, the earl of Richemont, was a bold and ambitious man, and Bedford planned to gratify his ambition. The earl of Richemont had been one of the prisoners taken at Azincourt. While in England, Henry V. had shown him much kindness, and had permitted him to visit Brittany on his parole, where affairs of state made his presence highly desirable. He was in Brittany when Henry's death took place, and declared that as his parole was only given to Henry, it was now void, and, therefore, he declined to return to England. The plea was wholly untenable according to the laws of honour, but Bedford, so far from seeking to enforce the obligations, sought to lay him under one of a more pleasing kind. He proposed a marriage between Richemont and another of the sisters of the duke of Burgundy, the widow of the dauphin Lewis, the elder brother of Charles. By this marriage, Richemont became not only allied to Burgundy, but to Bedford, and the duke of Brittany more deeply interested in the career of these princes. At this meeting they all swore to love each other as brothers, to support each other against the attacks of their enemies, whoever they might be; but above all, to protect the oppressed people of France, and to banish as soon as possible the scourge of war from its so long afflicted soil.

The new king of France, meanwhile, was not idle. He sought to strengthen himself in the only quarter from which he had hitherto received essential aid, namely, amongst the Scots. The duke of Albany, the regent of Scotland, was now dead, and his son and successor Murdoch, a man of an easy disposition, not finding any employment for the more restless and martial spirits amongst his subjects, those Scots eagerly offered their services to Charles VII., who gave them every encouragement, and heaped all the distinctions in his power upon them. The earl of Buchan, the brother of the Scottish regent, was himself not only their leader but the constable of France. Continued arrivals of these Scotch adventurers swelled the ranks of Charles. Amongst others the earl of Douglas brought over five thousand men. These strengthened Charles in the south, but as he possessed some fortresses in the north, Bedford determined first to clear those of the enemy, in order that he might afterwards advance with more confidence southwards. The castles of Dorsoy and Noyelle, the town of Rue in Picardy, and Pont-sur-Seine, Vertus, and Montaigue, successively fell before the English arms. But a still more decisive action took place in June at Crevant in Burgundy. There James Stuart, lord Darnley, at the head of a body of Scottish auxiliaries, and the marshal of Severac with a number of French troops, sat down before the town. The duke of Burgundy, feeling himself too weak in that quarter to cope with them, sent a pressing message to Bedford for aid. The duke at once despatched the earls of Salisbury and Suffolk to raise the siege of Crevant. But the French, relying on their numbers, and still more on the well-known valour of their Scottish allies, stood their ground, and awaited the attack. On their march the English fell in with the Burgundians at Auxerre, under the count of Toulongeon, hastening to the same goal. Still their united numbers were inferior to the enemy, and they had to force the passage of the Yonne in the face of the main body of the enemy.

The discipline of the combined army may be conceived from the regulations issued at Auxerre for its conduct. The soldiers were ordered to love and treat each other as brothers. That the vanguard should consist of one hundred and twenty men-at-arms, and the same number of archers, taken in equal proportions from each nation. When the orders were given for dismounting in the presence of the enemy, disobedience was to be punished with death. The horses were to be left half a league in the rear; and any man leaving his post in the line should suffer death. No prisoners were to be made till the victory was secure; or all such prisoners should be put to death, and the captor, too, if he resisted. Finally, every archer was ordered to supply himself with a stake sharpened at both ends, as used by Henry V. at Azincourt. The men carried each provision for two days; and thus they came in sight of the town. They found the French and Scots drawn up in great force on the right bank of the river. To draw them away from the place where they meant to cross, they appeared to direct the whole force of their attack upon the bridge. For three hours the battle raged there; but then, seeing that their stratagem had taken effect, the English at once plunged into the river, and were followed by the Burgundians. They forced their way over, gained the opposite bank, and the battle became fierce and general. The Scots fought valiantly; but the French, galled by a rear attack from the arrows of the garrison, soon gave way, and left their brave allies to bear the whole brunt of the battle. Attacked both in front and flank, the heroic Scots were mowed down mercilessly. The combined army cleared the field and entered the place in triumph, carrying with them prisoners two of the commanders, the count of Ventadour and lord Darnley; each of whom had lost an eye in the battle. Of the Scots, three thousand were said to be slain, and two thousand taken with their general.

This was a most disastrous blow to Charles, and the ruin of his affairs appeared imminent; but just at this crisis came reinforcements from both Italy and Scotland, and retrieved his fortunes. The duke of Milan sent him a strong body of Lombards, who surprised the Burgundian marshal,

Toulongeon, and took him prisoner; and thus they were enabled to exchange him for lord Darnley. It was at this moment also that the earl of Douglas landed with his five thousand Scots at Rochelle. Charles, delighted at this most timely succour, selected his body-guard from these Scottish auxiliaries; and, as he had already given to lord Stuart of Darnley the two lordships of Aubigny and Concressault, he now conferred on Douglas the more valuable dukedom of Tourraine, which had belonged to himself as dauphin. The French ambassador also reported that the regent of Scotland and the Scottish nobility had sworn in his presence to maintain the ancient alliance between the two countries, and promised—what was not in their power to perform—that, should their king be liberated, he should ratify their engagements.

In these circumstances there were many things to encourage Charles and mortify the English. This earl of Douglas, who now came to reinforce the new French king, was the same man who had before fought for Henry V.; and probably this going over was the main cause of his being rewarded with the dukedom of Tourraine. Besides this, John de la Pole, brother to the duke of Suffolk, was, on his return from Anjou into Normandy, laden with plunder, met at La Gravelle by a strong force under Harcourt, count of Aumale, one of the chiefs of the royal party. The English were taken by surprise, encumbered by their booty, and especially by ten thousand head of cattle. Taken at this disadvantage, the archers, however, planted their sharp stakes, and for some time maintained the unequal contest; but they were eventually compelled to give way, and leave their cattle behind them, as well as five hundred of their comrades slain, and their commander, de la Pole, prisoner.

De la Pole was soon afterwards exchanged; but these successes greatly encouraged all those who were inclined to go over to the French king. Several towns in the north and north-west of France had declared for their native prince. There was a spirit abroad there alarming to the English, and, therefore, instead of being able to cross the Loire and bear down effectually on Charles, they were compelled to defend their hold on their own northern territories. To add to this disquietude, the count of Richemont, whose friendship had been so anxiously sought by Bedford, soon proved that his character was of a kind not to be depended upon. That he was not bound by any principle of honour he had sufficiently shown by breaking his parole; and he soon showed Bedford that he who is contented to wink at the perfidy of such a man when it suits his interest, will soon have cause to open his eyes again in vexation. Richemont, haughty and ambitious, was not contented to serve but at the head of an army. This Bedford had not sufficient confidence in his abilities or his integrity to concede. Nothing short of that would satisfy him. Bedford had secured him an alliance with himself and the duke of Burgundy, by the marriage of Margaret, the sister of Burgundy; he had granted him ample lands, and he now offered him a liberal pension; but all would not soothe his offended dignity. He withdrew to his brother of Brittany, and used all his influence with him to detach him from the English interest.

Great Seal of Henry VI.

Chagrined by this, Bedford strove all the more to rivet the good-will of Burgundy; but at the very time when Bedford entered into the alliance with Burgundy and Brittany at Amiens, which was to be so brotherly, and to last for ever, those two princes had made a separate and secret treaty, which boded no good to England at some future day. Seeing how precarious the friendship of these princes was, Bedford turned his attention to another source of strength. It was of the utmost consequence to deprive Charles of the assistance of Scotland, and to obtain, if possible, the co-operation of the brave Scots for England. He wrote, therefore, to the council at home, earnestly recommending that the Scottish king should be liberated, allowed to return to his kingdom with honour, and on such terms as should make him a fast friend to the country.

It will be recollected that James, the son of Robert III. of Scotland, was kidnapped at sea by Henry IV. of England, as his father was sending him to France for security, this being his only remaining son and successor—the elder son, the duke of Rothsay, having been murdered by Ra-

morgny. James was well treated and well educated by Henry; but the duke of Albany, the young prince's uncle, having usurped the government of Scotland under the name of regent, it was equally the interest of Henry and Albany to retain the young king in England. He had, accordingly, remained a royal captive at the English court now eighteen years. On the death of Henry IV., Henry V. had still retained James, who could not have been restored without incurring a war with Albany, for which his continual wars in France left him no leisure. On the Scots engaging in

Henry VI.

France against him, he endeavoured to prevail on James to issue an order forbidding his subjects to serve in the army of the dauphin. James is said to have replied that so long as he was a captive, and his government in the hands of another, it neither became him to issue any such orders, nor for the Scots to obey it. He therefore steadfastly refused; but added that it would be a pleasure and an advantage to himself to make the campaign in France under so renowned a captain as himself. We have, therefore, seen James of Scotland commanding a detachment of Henry's army, on condition that within three months after its close he should be allowed to return to Scotland.

It would seem that the government of the infant Henry VI. did not feel themselves bound by the engagement between James and Henry V., for he was still in his captivity when Bedford suggested the policy of his release. The father and grandfather of James, Robert II. and Robert III., had been monarchs rather amiable than of great capacity: James was a very different person. His English education, his life and experience at the English court in the midst of very stirring times, and men of great talents, had operated on a mind naturally vigorous to such advantage, that he was not only a very accomplished man, but, as he showed, endowed with all the qualities of a great and active monarch.

James I. was in person handsome, in constitution vigorous, in mind frank, affable, generous, and just. His accomplishments were of a high order. He had cultivated a knowledge of books and music in his many long years of solitary life in the Tower and at Windsor. At Windsor

love had made a poet of him. He beheld from his window one of the queen's ladies in the court below, who wonderfully attracted his attention. This lady was Joan Beaufort, daughter of the duke of Somerset, grand-daughter of John of Gaunt, and niece of bishop Beaufort, afterwards the cardinal, the educator of the boy-king. Joan Beaufort was a fitting consort for the youthful king of Scotland. When he came, under Henry V., to have more liberty and freer intercourse with the court, her beauty and excellence entirely won his heart, and in honour of her he wrote the "King's Quhair," that is, the King's Book, a poem which to this day continues to be admired by all lovers of our old, genuine poetry.

On the arrival of Catherine of Valois, the young bride of Henry V., at Windsor, she was naturally interested in this handsome and accomplished captive king. She learned his attachment to the lady Beaufort, and, as we have seen, promoted his suit with the king and with her family. They were affianced; yet James was still detained in England. The time was now come when circumstances combined for his release. The old duke of Albany had been long dead, and his son Murdoch, who had succeeded him, was neither able to keep in order the rude barons of Scotland, nor his still ruder sons. Two of them were so haughty and licentious, that they were said to respect neither the authority of God nor man. Their behaviour to their father was destitute of all reverence, so much so, that one of them importuning the father for a favourite falcon, and he refusing it, the brutal son snatched it from the regent's wrist, and wrung its neck. The loss of his falcon did what numberless greater insults had not effected. "Since thou wilt give me neither reverence nor obedience," said the enraged Murdoch, "I will fetch home one whom we all must obey."

Murdoch Stuart was as good as his word. He began to make overtures to the English government for the return of James. As the young king was greatly attached to the English court, and likely to be more closely connected with it by marriage, the restoration to his throne was obviously much to the advantage of England under existing circumstances. At this juncture came the recommendation of Bedford, and the matter was accomplished. The Scots agreed to pay a considerable ransom by annual instalments. James was married to his admired Joan Beaufort, and, returning to his kingdom, was crowned with his queen at Scone, on the 21st of May, 1424.

While this great event was taking place, the duke of Bedford was engaged in active warfare. The count of Richemont and several Burgundian nobles had gone over to Charles; and, thus encouraged, his partisans had surprised Compeigne and Crotoy, and then the garrison of Ivry, which consisted of Bretons, opened the gates to the French. The duke procured fresh troops from England, retook Compeigne and Crotoy, and sat down before Ivry with two thousand men-at-arms and seven thousand archers. Charles collected, by great exertion, an army of fourteen thousand men, half of which were Scots. They were under the command of the earl of Buchan, constable of France, attended by the earl of Douglas, the duke of Alençon, the marshal la Fayette, the count of Aumale, and the viscount of Narbonne. On reaching Ivry, he found it surrounded, and the position of the English too strong for attack; he therefore marched to Verneuil, which opened its gates to him.

Bedford did not allow them much time to enjoy their good fortune. Leaving a garrison in Ivry, he marched on to Verneuil. At his approach Buchan called a council of war, to determine what course of action they should adopt. The more prudent portion of the council advised a retreat, representing that all the past misfortunes of France had resulted from their rashness in giving battle when there was no necessity for it; and that this was the last army of the king, the only force remaining to enable him to defend the few provinces which were left him. But there were a great number of young French noblemen, who, precisely as at Azincourt, insisted upon fighting, and that counsel prevailed.

The French army possessed many advantages in the fight. They were greatly superior to Bedford in numbers, but they were an ill-assorted crowd of French, Italians, and Scotch, the last the only staunch portion of the host. They had, however, the town defending one of their flanks, and for them, if necessary, to fall back upon. They took the precaution to leave their horses and baggage in the city, and to fight on foot, with the exception of about two thousand men-at-arms, chiefly Italians, on horseback.

The English had, as usual, adopted the tactics of Crecy and Azincourt. The duke had ordered them to post the horses and baggage in the rear; to plant their pointed stakes in front, and wait.

The earl of Douglas, aware of the mischief of attacking these archers thus posted, also advised to wait, and provoke, if possible, the English to attack him. But here, again, the characteristic impatience of the French defeated his wise caution. The count of Narbonne rushed on with his division, shouting "Mountjoye! St. Denis!" and the rest were obliged to follow and support him. The whole body of the French army came down upon the English front, which stood firm under the shock, shouting "St. George for Bedford!" The weight and impetuosity of the enemy broke in some degree the ranks of the archers, and forced them back towards their baggage, which they found attacked by La Hire and Saintraille, with their cavalry. The archers let fly at these, and after repeated charges put the whole to flight, the Italians being the first to flinch under the deadly shower of arrows, and gallop off the field. The archers then turned again, accompanied by their rear division, and fell furiously on the van of the enemy. Here they came upon the Scots, who were fighting like lions, and for three hours they maintained a deadly struggle against the archers in front, and the duke of Bedford thundering on their flank with his men-at-arms. The French well supported their Scottish allies, but at length the whole were compelled to give way, and were pursued with great slaughter. The carnage was terrible. There were about four thousand French, Scots, and Italians left on the field, and sixteen hundred of the English. The earl of Buchan, the earl of Douglas and his son lord James Douglas, Sir Alexander Meldrum, and many other Scots of rank and distinction were slain. Of the French, four counts, two viscounts, eight barons, and nearly three hundred knights fell; amongst them, the viscount Narbonne, chief author of the mischief, the counts Tonnere and Ventadour, with sieurs Roche-baron and Gamaches. The duke of Alençon, marshal La Fayette, and two hundred gentlemen were made prisoners. Bedford, as his brother Henry had done at Azincourt, called his officers around him, and returned thanks to God on the field. In everything

the duke had kept in view the military maxims of his illustrious brother, and the battle of Verneuil was long compared to that of Azincourt. It was fought on the 17th of August, 1424. But it was the last great victory of this able commander, whose prudence and ability were destined henceforth to be crippled and eventually crushed by the reckless ambition and fatal quarrels of his relatives, above all by the conduct of his brother Gloucester.

This great overthrow appeared to annihilate the power of Charles VII. His last army was dispersed and demoralised. The Scots were so decimated that they never again could form a distinct corps in the French army, for they could no longer draw fresh troops from their own country, where now James I. reigned in strict alliance with England. Charles was so straightened that he had not even money for his personal needs, much less for subsisting his troops. It was all that he could do to get his table supplied with the plainest fare for himself and his few followers. Day after day brought him the news of some fresh loss or disaster. Towns most important to him were compelled to surrender for want of supplies. All the country north of the Loire was lost to him, and his enemies were preparing to drive him out of the last remains of his hereditary kingdom.

But it was the singular fortune of this prince, when reduced by his demerits to the lowest condition, always to find himself raised again by circumstances, which no merit or talent of the ablest or most prudent man could originate. He was, spite of his weaknesses, his follies, and his repeated overthrows, always saved by something little short of a miracle, and reserved to triumph over all his enemies, and to secure to the French crown provinces which it had lost for ages.

This time the dissensions of the English council turned the scale in his favour. Instead of the duke of Gloucester exerting himself to maintain concord at home, and sending over fresh forces and supplies to his brother the regent in France, he had plunged himself into violent altercations with Henry Beaufort, which produced anger, dissensions, and partisanship in the government, and threatened the worst consequences. But still more startling and pregnant with calamity was the rash marriage of Gloucester with Jacqueline of Bavaria. Nothing so mischievous as this to the ascendency of England in France could have been devised by the subtlest enemy; and Gloucester appears to have been of so headstrong and impetuous a temper, that he set at nought all considerations of policy and all sound advice.

The Duke of Brabant driving away the Ladies of his Wife Jacqueline.

Jacqueline of Bavaria was the heiress of Hainault, Holland, Zeeland, and Friesland. This heiress of whole kingdoms was, moreover, handsome, high-spirited, and of a bold and masculine understanding. The court of France had early cast its eyes upon her desirable domains, and secured her for the dauphin John. After the death of the dauphin, her uncle, called John the Merciless, who had formerly waged fierce war to deprive her of her heritage, now sought to marry her to the duke of Brabant, whose stepfather he was. Henry V. had sought her hand for his brother Bedford; but the immense advantage which the possession of Hainault and Holland would give to the English, already on the eve, as it appeared, of becoming masters of France, no doubt excited the strongest, if not

the most open opposition on the part of her near relative the duke of Burgundy, and others who dreaded such a contingency. Jacqueline was worried into the marriage with the duke of Brabant. It was an ill-starred union. The duke was a mere boy of sixteen, and a sickly and wilful boy. Jacqueline was of ripe womanly age, and had, too, a will of her own. She began with despising her husband, and ended by hating him. Their life was diversified chiefly by quarrels. The favourite of her husband, William le Bégue, had insulted Jacqueline, and, at her instigation, her half-brother, called the Bastard of Hainault, proceeded to punish him, and, in truth, killed him. Her husband, in his revenge, drove away all the ladies and the servants who had accompanied her from Holland; and soon after the people rose and massacred the favourites of the duke. Jacqueline got away to her mother at Valenciennes, and from Valenciennes she made her way over to England, where she was received with a warm welcome, and had a pension of £100 per month conferred on her by the king.

While in England she is said to have fallen in love with the duke of Gloucester, and the duke returned the sentiment with the promptitude which his own ardent character and the extent of the lady's lands made very natural. Henry V., however, saw instantly how destructive would be any such alliance of all his hopes in France. The duke of Brabant was the near relative of the duke of Burgundy, and Burgundy was his heir. It was inevitable that the duke would view with profound alarm a marriage which would not only deprive him of the reversion of Holland and Hainault, but place the English on almost every side of his paternal lands, with an extension of power and influence perfectly overwhelming. Henry, therefore, not only did all in his power to discourage this ominous connection, but it no doubt lay very much at the bottom of his earnest injunctions on his death-bed to his brothers to cultivate with all their energy the friendship of Burgundy.

But all sentiments of policy or prudence were lost on Gloucester. His ambition, if not his love, fired at the idea of possessing such a splendid territory in right of his wife, made him disregard every other consideration. He resolved to marry Jacqueline, contending that the duke of Brabant was within the prescribed degrees of consanguinity, though a dispensation had been obtained for that very purpose. A second dispensation was requisite before Gloucester could marry the duchess, and this the pope, Martin V., refused, in consequence of the representations of the duke of Burgundy. Resolved not to be defeated, Gloucester applied to Benedict XIII., who, though he had been deposed from the papal chair by the council of Constance, refused to submit to its dictum. He was only too happy to oblige where Martin had disobliged, and Gloucester married the heiress of Holland.

So long as Gloucester and his bride remained quiescent in England, the duke of Burgundy, probably under the persuasions of Bedford, remained passive also. But presently Gloucester and Jacqueline landed at Calais with an English army of five or six thousand men. This was a few weeks after the great battle of Verneuil, and Burgundy was greatly pleased, believing that Gloucester was come with reinforcements for the combined army destined to complete the subjugation of France. But his astonishment and indignation knew no bounds, when he learned that Gloucester and his lady had marched directly into Hainault, and taken possession of it in virtue of the marriage. He was at the moment celebrating his own nuptials with the dowager duchess of Nevers. He instantly recalled his troops from the combined army, and sent them to assist the duke of Brabant to drive Gloucester from Hainault. He wrote the most passionate letters to all his vassals, commanding them to hasten to the assistance of Brabant. On his part, Gloucester wrote to the duke of Burgundy, deprecating his hostility, declaring that he had broken no treaty or peace with Burgundy, and was merely taking possession of his own. He even added that Burgundy had formerly favoured this very alliance. To this Burgundy replied by declaring it false, and the two angry dukes proceeded to still higher words, and the engagement to fight a duel, which, however, never came off.

Meantime, the effect of this quarrel was most disastrous to the campaign of Bedford. Not only had the duke of Burgundy withdrawn his troops to oppose Gloucester, but Gloucester, on his part, also intercepted the troops and supplies intended for Bedford, and diverted them to his own contest in Hainault. In a great council at Paris it was at length decided that the legitimacy of the two marriages should be submitted to the pope, and that the contest should pause till his decision was received. The duke of Brabant consented, but Gloucester refused. The duke of Burgundy, thereupon, prosecuted the war against Gloucester with redoubled determination; and, to add to Bedford's embarassment, the count of Richemont, flattered by Charles with the appointment of constable of France, vacant by the death of the earl of Buchan at Verneuil, prevailed on his brother, the duke of Brittany, also to go over to Charles. Nay, the Burgundians, brought into contact with the enemies of England, began to listen to their representations of the English ambition, and suggestions were even made to the duke from various quarters for a reconciliation with the rightful king of France. Luckily the murder of his father was still strong in his remembrance, and he remained for eight years longer the ally of his brother-in-law, Bedford, but not the same cordial and efficient one.

Gloucester maintained the contest against his combined foes for about a year and a half, when the exhaustion of his resources, and his jealousy of the growing influence of his uncle Beaufort in the government at home, drew him to England. His departure was fatal to all his views on Hainault. No sooner was he gone than Valenciennes, Condé, and Bouchain opened their gates to Burgundy. Jacqueline, at Gloucester's departure, had entreated him not to leave her behind. But the people of Mons insisted on her remaining there to head the resistance to Brabant and Burgundy. It was only in tears that she consented to remain, predicting the fatal consequences of their separation. Her fears were speedily confirmed. Mons was invested by Burgundy, and the perfidious citizens delivered up Jacqueline to him. She was conducted by the prince of Orange to Ghent, where she was to be detained till the pope had decided on the validity of the marriage.

The adventurous Jacqueline did not feel herself bound to wait for the decree of the pontiff. She planned, with a woman's ingenuity, escape from her prison. She seized her opportunity, dressed herself and her maid in male attire, stole unobserved, in the dusk of the evening, out of her place of detention, mounted on horseback, and, passing the city gates, continued her flight till she reached the borders

of Holland, where her subjects received her with enthusiasm. But the duke of Burgundy was not inclined thus to let her escape. He pursued her to Holland; her subjects refused to betray her, and a war was prosecuted in that country for two years. The duke of Gloucester sent her a reinforcement of five hundred men, and would have sent her more, but was prevented by Bedford and the council.

In 1423 the pope pronounced the validity of the marriage with the duke of Brabant; but that feeble personage died soon after and Jacqueline, who now certainly, according to all the laws of God and man, was free, became the wife of Gloucester. But right was of little importance in that age, and especially in the case of a woman. The duke of Burgundy, called the Good—for what reason we never could discover—was determined to reduce her by force of arms, and compel her to acknowledge him as her heir. Had England not been engaged in the conquest of France, the duke of Gloucester would have been victoriously supported in his claim; as it was, these claims were destructive of the greater object of ambition. Little, however, as the duke of Gloucester was able to contribute to the support of his wife, who now assumed the title of the duchess of Gloucester, it enabled her to maintain the contest till 1428, when the power of Burgundy bore her down; and he compelled her to sign a treaty nominating him her heir, admitting him to garrison her towns and fortresses in security of that claim, and pledging her word never to marry without his consent.

In England the ladies, scandalised at Gloucester, who was publicly living with Eleanor Cobham, the daughter of Reginald, lord Cobham of Sterborough, warmly espoused the cause of Jacqueline, and, headed by a Mrs. Stokes, the wives of the leading merchants of London presented a petition to the lords against Gloucester, for neglect of his wife, the duchess Jacqueline. Whether the petition of the ladies had that effect is not stated, but soon after, to the astonishment of all the world, the duke publicly acknowledged dame Eleanor Cobham as his wife, and Jacqueline, spite of her stipulation with the duke of Burgundy, also married a gentleman named Frank of Bursellen. Burgundy instantly seized the new husband, and only liberated him on condition that Jacqueline surrendered to him the remainder of her territories, reserving only an annual rent for her own maintenance.

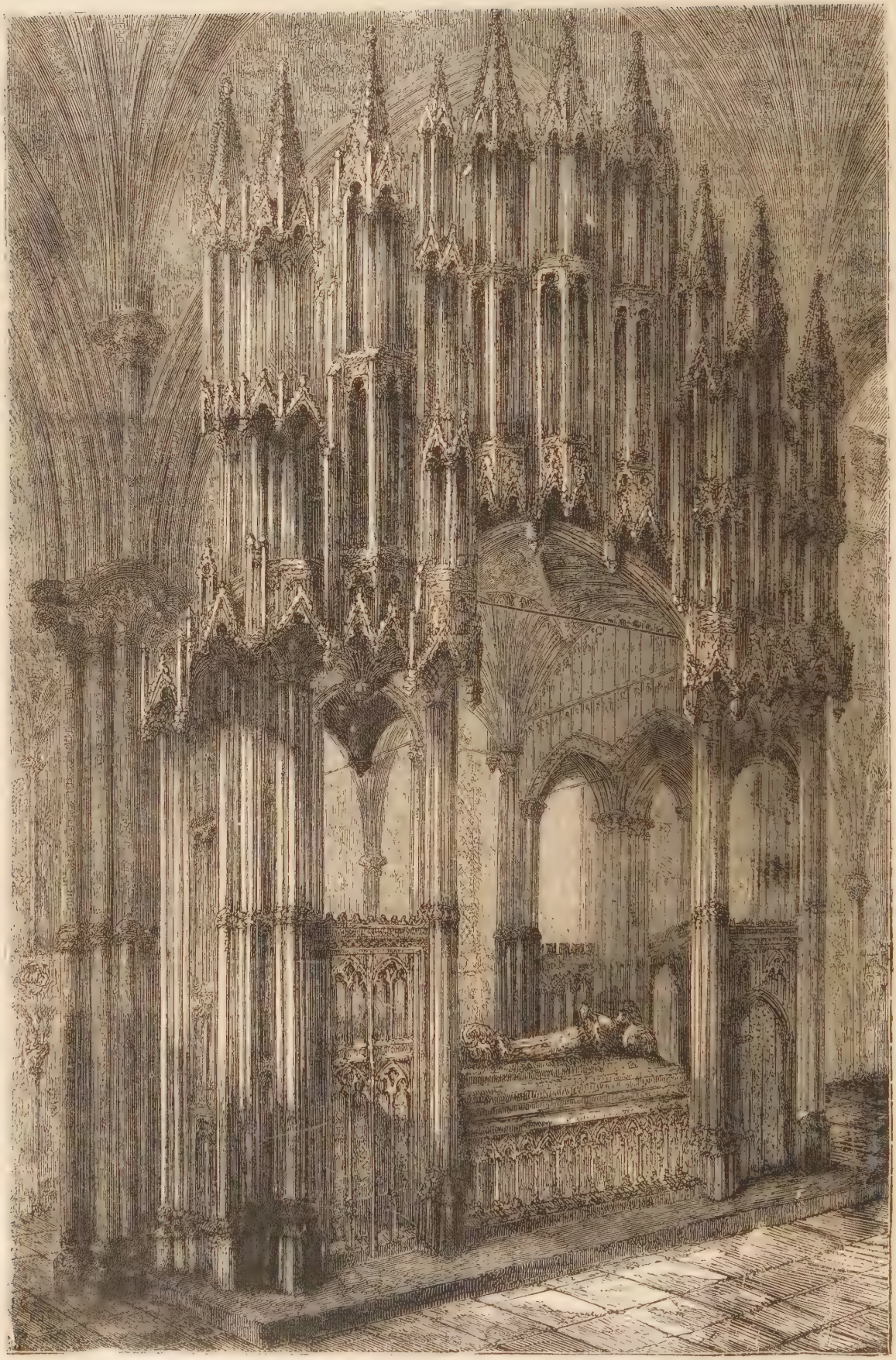
The war in Hainault and Holland, created by the marriage of Gloucester and Jacqueline of Bavaria, whose life more resembles a romance than a piece of real history, perfectly crippled the proceedings of Bedford. He lost the grand opportunity of following up the impression of the battle of Verneuil, and thus putting an end to the war. For three years the war was almost at a stand-still. Neither the regent nor Charles were in a condition to make further demonstrations than slight skirmishes and sieges, which, without advancing one party or the other, tended to sink the people still deeper in misery. This interval presented in the court of Charles a series of the most disgraceful and bloody intrigues, and in the court of London the most bitter dissensions.

Charles VII., during three years, in which the duke of Bedford's hands were completely tied by the circumstances related, had, notwithstanding his late severe disasters, a fair opportunity of gathering new strength, and making head against the embarrassed English. The duke of Brittany was eventually prevailed upon by the earl of Richemont to go over to Charles. There were various other symptoms of the goodwill of the people and of different nobles to his cause. But the opportunity was wasted, and worse than wasted; fresh follies and crimes exposed him to the contempt of his subjects.

The earl of Richemont, invested with the dignity of constable, was ambitious of distinguishing himself in the field against the enemy; but the court of Charles presented only a sty of debauchery, not an assembly of warriors. Charles was engrossed with his mistresses, and his favourites ruled everything with the most insolent license. Richemont, who saw that nothing was to be done while such was the case, resolved to take the most sanguinary measures to purge this Augean stable. The Sieur de Giac, who, with his wife, had played so conspicuous a part in the inveiglement and murder of the duke of Burgundy, was the chief of these favourites, whose word was law. Richemont seized him at midnight in his bed, and consigned him to the tender mercies of his servile tool, George de la Tremoille, count of Guisnes. This man set De Giac half naked on horseback, and, strongly guarded, carried him to Dun-le-Roi, where he tied a great stone to his neck and flung him into the river.

The place of the favourite, notwithstanding this appalling warning, was, however, speedily occupied by another, named Camues de Beaulieu. Him Richemont had despatched with still more promptitude and audacity. His assassins fell upon him in a field immediately after quitting the presence of the king, and stabbed him to death. Charles, on seeing the favourite's horse come galloping back covered with blood, was excessively enraged at this second murder of his favourite, and vowed vengeance; but, as in the case of the death of Burgundy, he remained perfectly passive. To console him, and to answer his own ends, Richemont recommended the very assassin, De la Tremoille, to his good graces. He calculated on Tremoille's devotion to him; but he was in this case mistaken. De la Tremoille was as crafty as he was devoid of conscience. He immediately consoled, not only the king, but Madame de Giac, whose husband he had drowned. Assisted by the genius of his wife, he soon exerted the most unlimited power over Charles, and set Richemont at defiance. The deluded and enraged constable determined to destroy the traitor. He entered into a conspiracy with several other noblemen to seize Tremoille by force and kill him. But Tremoille was more knowing than the duke of Burgundy. He laughed at all the smooth overtures of Richemont; refused to meet him and his friends; kept close with the king in the castle; maintained a strong guard, and saw his enemies, who laid open siege to the fortress, obliged by the winter to retire.

In the spring the conspirators returned, and took the town of Bourges; but the king and his favourite had already abandoned the place, and sought a fresh stronghold. Richemont's allies made their submission, and he himself was compelled to retire; when he made an ineffectual war on Charles in Poictou and Saintonge. De la Tremoille and his wife maintained their ascendency, but often the miserable king was surrounded by embarrassments. Marshal Severac, who had fought so long and bravely for him, was become outrageous for the arrears of pay for himself and soldiers. He threatened that if the king did not pay him, he would desolate and plunder the whole of Languedoc. On examining the state of the royal coffers there were found



CARDINAL BEAUFORT'S CHANTRY, WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL.

only two crowns. In another quarter, the count of Faix seized Beziers, and the queen's brother, René of Anjou,

Joan of Arc.

went over to the English. Such was the condition of Charles VII.

On the other hand, Bedford was equally incapacitated from availing himself of the opportunity to crush this last feeble remains of the royalty of France. The court of London was torn by the dissensions of his brother Gloucester and Beaufort, bishop of Winchester. That prelate was not more ambitious than he was politic. He carefully

hoarded the large revenues of his see and of his private estate, and gave an air of patriotism to his wealth, by lending it to the crown in its need. He had furnished to the late king twenty-eight thousand pounds, and to the present eleven thousand pounds. He had thrice held the high office of chancellor; he had been the ecclesiastical representative at the council of Constance, and had acquired a good character for sanctity by having made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

Every act of his ambition wore an air of patriotism. He had in his character of guardian of the young king, and of chancellor, opposed, with all his energy, the attempt of Gloucester on Hainault. When the duke persisted in proceeding on that expedition, he took advantage of his absence to garrison the Tower, and committed it to the keeping of Richard Wydville, with the significant injunction "to admit no one more powerful than himself." On the return of Gloucester he was accordingly refused a lodging in the Tower; and rightly attributing the insult to the secret orders of his uncle Beaufort, he instantly took counter-measures by ordering the lord mayor to close the city gates, and to furnish him with five hundred horsemen, as a guard, with which he might in safety pay his respects to his nephew, the king, at Eltham. The followers of Beaufort, on the other hand, posted themselves at the foot of London Bridge, of which they sought to take forcible possession. They barricaded the street, placed archers at all the windows on both sides, and declared that, as the duke had excluded the chancellor from going into the city, they would prevent the duke going out. The country was on the very edge of civil war. In vain the archbishop of Canterbury and the duke of Coimbra, the second son of the king of Portugal, by Philippa, sister of the late monarch, rode to and fro between the hostile relatives, endeavouring to affect a pacification. The bishop wrote off post haste to Bedford, entreating him to come instantly to prevent the effusion of blood. "For, by my troth," he said, "an ye tarry long, we shall put this land in jeopardy with a field, such a brother ye have here! God make him a good man!"

Bedford left his now greatly weakened post in France with a groan over the folly and the obstinacy of his brother; and landing in England a little before Christmas, summoned a parliament to meet at Leicester in February. In the meantime he strove hard to reconcile the antagonists. He sent the archbishop of Canterbury and a deputation of the lords to request Gloucester to meet the council at Northampton towards the end of January, representing that there could be no reasonable objection on his part to meet his uncle, who, as the accused party, had just right to be heard; and assuring him that efficient measures should be taken to prevent any collision between their followers.

Gloucester, in his fierce resentment, was not to be persuaded; he was, therefore, summoned to attend in his place in parliament. There Gloucester presented a bill of impeachment against Beaufort, in which, after stating his own grievances, he preferred two serious charges, which he swore had been communicated to him by the late king, his brother. These were nothing less than that Beaufort had exhorted Henry V. to usurp the crown during the life of his father; and, secondly, that he, Beaufort, had hired assassins to murder Henry while he was prince of Wales.

Beaufort replied to these charges that, so far as they related to the late king, they were false, and he instanced, in proof of his innocence, the confidence Henry V. had reposed in him on coming to the throne, and his constant employment of him. He denied having given just cause of offence to Gloucester, and complained of Gloucester's behaviour towards him. The duke of Bedford and the other lords took an oath to judge impartially between the opponents, and then they on their part agreed to leave the decision to the archbishop of Canterbury and eight other arbitrators. After Beaufort had solemnly declared that he had no ill-will to Gloucester, and besought his reconciliation, Gloucester appeared to consent. They shook hands, the bishop resigned his seals of office, and requested permission to travel.

It was thought, however, that Gloucester was by no means in a mood for submitting even to the council. He was reported to say, "Let my brother govern as him listeth whiles he is in this land; after his going over into France I woll governe as me seemeth." Out of doors the followers of the two antagonists, being forbidden to bring arms to the neighbourhood of the parliament, they came with bats upon their shoulders, whence it was called the Parliament of Bats. These being also forbidden, they put stones and lumps of lead in their pockets, so ready were they for an affray.

The council, apprehensive of mischief, and especially from Gloucester after the departure of Bedford, called upon both of the dukes to swear that, during the minority of the king, and for the peace and security of his throne, they would "be advised, demeaned, and ruled by the lords of the council; and obey unto the king and to them as lowly as the least and poorest of his subjects."

Bedford, after a sojourn of eight months, returned to France. The duke of Brittany was severely punished for his defection. The English poured their troops into his province, and overran it with fire and sword to the very walls of Rennes. The duke solicited an armistice; it was denied him: again the war went on, and again he was everywhere discomfited. At length he was compelled to accept the terms dictated by Bedford, and swore once more, with all his barons, prelates, and commonalty, to observe the treaty of Troyes, and do homage to Henry for his territories, and to no other prince whatever.

Flushed with this success, the leaders of the army in the following year, 1428, were urgent to make a grand descent on the country south of the Loire, and to drive Charles from the provinces yet adhering to him. Bedford, conscious of the suspicious character of some of his allies, was strongly opposed to the measure. Several councils were held in Paris to discuss the propriety of this undertaking, and Bedford in vain opposed it; he was overwhelmed by a majority of voices. Of this circumstance he afterwards complained in one of his letters to the king. "Alle things prospered for you," he wrote, "till the time of the seage of Orleans, taken in hand God knoweth by what advice." It was now Orleans that the commanders were eager to attack. Montague, earl of Salisbury, had just brought over from England a reinforcement of 6,000 men. He was regarded only inferior in the field to the earl of Warwick, and was, therefore, unanimously elected general on the occasion.

Orleans was one of the most important places in the kingdom; it commanded the great road to the southern provinces. It was one of the few places which still could show

some remaining vestiges of prosperity. Its fall would be fatal to the independence of the whole realm. On the part of the French everything was done which could enable it to hold out a siege. Abundant stores and ammunition were collected into the city; batteries were erected on all sides upon the walls, and, to afford the enemy no shelter, the beautiful suburbs, containing twelve churches, various monasteries, and mansions of the citizens, were razed to the ground. The vineyards, gardens, and fields for a league round were laid as bare as a highway. The inhabitants of the neighbouring country, and of the towns of Bourges, Poictiers, Rochelle, and other places, sent money, troops, and stores. The parliament at Chinon voted four hundred thousand francs in aid of the city. Charles VII. himself appeared to be roused from his torpor by the imminent danger of this quiet town, and sent thither all the troops that he could spare, under some of his most famous commanders, Saintrailles, De Guitry, and Villars. He appointed the count de Gaucourt governor, and many brave Scots, encouraged by a treaty which Charles had made with their sovereign, James I., binding himself to marry the dauphin to a daughter of his, and give him the county of Evreaux or the duchy of Berri, threw themselves into it. There was every prospect of a desperate defence.

Salisbury, reducing Meun, Jeuville, and other places on the way, advanced towards Orleans, and sat down before it on the 12th of October. He pitched his tent amid the ruins of a monastery on the left bank of the river, and directed his first attack against the Tournelles, a tower built at the extremity of the bridge leading into the city. This he took by assault; but the garrison retreating, broke down an arch of the bridge behind them, and there was another defence erected at the city end of the bridge. From the windows of the evacuated Tournelles, Salisbury directed the attack on the city. His post was discovered, and a huge stone ball was discharged from a cannon at the window. He observed the flash, and started aside; but the window was dashed in, the officer who had been standing behind him was killed, and the iron-work of the window driven in different directions with such force, that Salisbury was so wounded in the face by it that he died in about a week.

The command devolved on the earl of Suffolk, who endeavoured to convert the siege into a blockade. He erected huts at intervals all round the city, covered from the enemy's fire by banks of earth, throwing up lines of entrenchments from one of these posts, or bastiles, as they were called, to the other. But the circuit which they had thus to occupy was so vast that the intervals between the bastiles were too great for his amount of forces to secure. The Bastard of Orleans, a natural son of the duke of Orleans who was killed by Burgundy, made his way into the city with numerous bodies of French, Scots, Spaniards, and Italians. De Culant, whom Charles had named Admiral of France, did the like by means of the river, and thus Orleans continued during the winter to set the besiegers at defiance.

Early in February the duke of Bedford sent aid from Paris, Sir John Fastolfe, with fifteen hundred men, and four hundred wagons and carts laden with stores and provisions for the army before Orleans. Sir John had reached Rouvrai en Beausse, when he received the alarming intelligence that the count Charles of Bourbon, the count of Clermont, and Sir John Stewart, constable of Scotland, had thrown themselves with four or five thousand cavalry betwixt him and Orleans. They were moreover in full march upon him. This intelligence reached him at midnight, and he lost no time in preparing for the attack. He drew up all his wagons and carts in a circle, enclosing his troops, leaving an opening at each end, where he posted his archers in great force. Every moment he expected the attack, but the enemy was disputing as to the best mode of making the assault. The French were for charging on horseback, the Scots were for dismounting and fighting on foot. It was not till three o'clock in the morning when the disputants resolved each to fight in their own way. The attack was made simultaneously at both openings, but the archers sent such well-directed volleys of arrows amongst the assailants, that the French speedily galloped off the field, leaving nearly all the Scots dead upon it. Six hundred of the united, or rather disunited, force were slain; and Sir John marched in triumph into the camp before Orleans with the stores which the French had confidently counted upon making their own. The constable of Scotland, the Sieurs D'Albret and Rochechouart were amongst the slain, and the count of Dunois was severely wounded. This battle, from the salted fish and provisions which Sir John was conveying for the use of the army during Lent, was called the Battle of Herrings.

This was a severe blow to Charles VII. There appeared only one way of preventing the almost immediate loss of his crown. The English commander was actively pressing the siege. He had cast up a still more complete line round the city, fresh reinforcements enabled him to make the bastiles more numerous, and famine began to menace the place with all its horrors. To avoid the fall of Orleans, Charles engaged the duke of Orleans, who had been so long a prisoner in England, to exert himself with the protector and council in England to guarantee the neutrality of his demesnes, and for greater security to consign them during the war to their ally, the duke of Burgundy. To this the council consented, as placing the duchy in a manner in the hands of England. The duke of Burgundy readily accepted this trust, and waited on Bedford in Paris to apprise him of it. But Bedford, by no means flattered by the expected prey being thus adroitly taken out of his hands, coolly said that he was not of a humour to beat the bushes while others ran away with the game. Burgundy affected to smile at the apt simile, and retired; but it was with a resolve in his breast, to be made apparent in due time.

Foiled in this attempt, Charles now gave way to despair. The city of Orleans could not possibly long hold out, and he determined to retire with the miserable remainder of his forces into Languedoc and Dauphiny, and there await the last attacks of the conquering foe. This cowardly resolve was, however, vehemently resisted by the queen, who declared that it would be the total ruin of his affairs; and his mistress, Agnes Sorel, who was living on the best of terms with the queen, supported her in this protest vigorously; threatening, if he made so pusillanimous a retreat, to go over to England and seek a better fortune in the British court. This decided the weak prince not to throw away the sceptre of his kingdom; and while affairs were bringing on this critical situation, help, and eventually triumph, were sent from a quarter which no human sagacity could have discovered.

On the borders of Lorraine, but just within the province of Champagne, lies the hamlet of Domremy, situate between Neufchateau and Vaucouleurs. In this hamlet lived a small farmer of the name of James d'Arc; and his daughter Joan, whilst a little girl, was accustomed to shepherd his small flock of sheep in the fields and heaths around. The scene of her most favourite haunt was near an old spreading beech-tree, beneath which the fairies were said to dance at night, on the banks of a clear little stream, the waters of which were reputed to be especially efficacious in the cure of diseases. Further towards the forest was a solitary chapel of the Virgin, where Joan was accustomed to say her daily prayers; and every Saturday, accompanied by some of her companions, she used to hang up in the chapel a garland of flowers, or burn a taper in honour of the mother of Christ. These facts show a great susceptibility of the imagination, and they, no doubt, nourished it, and confirmed her deep feelings of piety. When about five years of age, whilst walking in her father's garden on a Sunday, she declared that she saw a bright light in the air near her, and turning towards it saw a figure, who said that he was the archangel Michael, and commanded her to be good and dutiful, and that God would protect her. The need of this exhortation was supposed to proceed from the hardness and severity of her father, who, on hearing this, became so unkind that Joan left her home and engaged herself to a widow, an innkeeper at Neufchateau, where she acted as hostler, as you see young women in France still doing. Here she showed herself active and intrepid, riding the horses to water, and even making journeys for her mistress. But in her conduct she was still distinguished for her deep and unaffected piety. De Serres says: "She had a modest countenance, sweet, civil, and resolute; her discourse was temperate, reasonable, and retired; her actions cold, showing great chastity."

After remaining five years with her mistress at the inn, she returned to her father's, and again tended his flock. Probably the society into which she was thrown at the inn was becoming too repulsive to her growing seriousness and the spiritual communionship to which she believed herself admitted. She had now reached the age of eighteen. The fortunes of France were at their lowest ebb. The inhabitants of Domremy were royalists, but those of Marcey, the next village, were Burgundians. The spirit of faction raged between these little places as violently as in the armies themselves. Thence arose constant feuds, and the bitterness descended to the children as fiercely as it lived in the hearts of the adults. When they met they fought and pelted each other with stones. Joan saw all this, and heard the insults of the Burgundians when the king was defeated and disgraced. At this moment came the terrible news of the great battle of Verneuil, and she saw the distress and despair of her friends and neighbours. The visions and the heavenly voices came now still oftener, and comforted her, till the siege, the famine, and the expected fall of Orleans renewed the general trouble. With the archangel Michael she now regularly saw the saints Catherine and Margaret, who were the patronesses of her parish church. They exhorted her to devote herself to the salvation of her country. She represented that she was a poor peasant maiden, and did not know anything of such great matters; but the archangel Michael assured her that strength and wisdom would be given her, and that the saints Catherine and Margaret would go with her, and that all would be well. The two female saints then appeared to her, surrounded by a great light, their heads crowned with jewels, and their voices gentle and sweet as music. Joan knew that there was a prophecy abroad that, as France had been ruined by a wicked woman—Isabella of Bavaria—so it should be restored by a virgin, spotless, and devoted to the rescue of her country. Nay, this saviour of France was to come out of the neighbouring forest of oaks, Bois-chesnu.

The heavenly voices became more and more frequent, more and more urgent, as the affairs of France approached a crisis, announcing that she was the maid who was appointed to save France. Joan became greatly distressed, and was often found weeping when the visions left her, and longing that the angels of paradise would carry her away with them. Her parents had no faith in her visions, and, to prevent her going off to the army, they endeavoured to force her into a marriage; but Joan had voluntarily taken a vow of perpetual chastity, and she revolted with horror from the proposal. Just then a party of Burgundians fell on the village of Domremy, plundered it, and burnt down the church. Joan, with her parents, was compelled to flee and seek refuge in Neufchateau. When they returned to Domremy, and beheld the scene of desolation, the indignation of Joan was roused to the highest pitch. The voices now commanded her, on pain of the forfeiture of her salvation, to go at once to Baudricourt, the governor of Vaucouleurs, and demand an escort to the court of the king. There she was to announce to him that she was sent to raise the siege of Orleans, and to crown him, the rightful king of France, in the city of Rheims. Joan now gave way; there was nothing to be hoped from her parents but opposition; she therefore hastened secretly to Vaucouleurs, to an uncle there, who was a simple, pious man, and who had often excited her childish feelings by taking her on his knee, and telling her sorrowful stories of the wars of France. The old man, a wheelwright by trade, at once went with her to the governor. Baudricourt at first refused to see her; when she was, at length, through her importunity, admitted, he looked upon her as crazed, and told her uncle that he should send her back to her parents again, and that she ought to be well whipped. Joan said, "It was her Lord's work, and she must do it." "Who is your lord?" asked Baudricourt. "The King of Heaven!" replied Joan. This satisfied the governor of her insanity, and he rudely dismissed her. But Joan still remained at Vaucouleurs, daily praying before the high altar in the church, and asserting that the voices urged her day and night to proceed and execute her mission. The rumour of this strange maiden flew rapidly through the town and the surrounding country; the sight of her modesty and piety, and the fame of her past pure and devout life, brought numbers of people to see her, and amongst others men of high note. The duke of Lorraine, who was labouring under an incurable disease, sent to seek her art, as a woman possessed of supernatural powers; but Joan, with that clearness and simplicity which marked her throughout, replied, "That she had no mission to him; he had never been named to her by her voices." On all such occasions her language and conduct were the same. She was totally devoid of anything like wildness and extravagance; clear in intellect; self-possessed and single in her one purpose—to relieve Orleans and crown the king. When afterwards one friar Richard told her he could bring

a woman to her who possessed supernatural powers, and who might help her, she replied, "I have nothing to do with her; the Lord has given me my work, and he will enable me to do it." She added, "Since the Sieur de Baudricourt will not listen to me, I will set out to king Charles on foot, though I should wear my legs down to my knees on the road; for neither dukes nor kings, nor yet the daughter of the king of Scotland, can raise up this suffering France. There is no help but in me. And yet, in sooth, how much rather would I stay at home and spin by my mother's side, for this is work that I am not used to; but I must do it, since my Lord wills it."

Baudricourt was compelled by the public voice to take charge of her; but not before he had tested her by a priest and the sprinkling of holy water, that she was no sorceress, nor possessed of the devil. The seigneurs de Metz and Bertrand de Poulengi, who had conceived full faith in her, offered to accompany her, with her brother Peter, two servants, a king's messenger, and Richard, an archer of the royal guard. The journey thus undertaken in the middle of February, 1429, was, according to ordinary ideas, little short of an act of madness. The distance from Vaucouleur to Chinon in Tourraine, where Charles's court lay, was a hundred and fifty leagues, through a country abounding with hostile garrisons, and, where they were absent, with savage marauders. But Joan declared that they should go in perfect safety, and they did so. Joan rode boldly, in man's attire, and with a sword by her side; but they saw not even a single enemy. In ten days they arrived at Fierbois, a few miles from Chinon, and she sent to inform the king of her desire to wait upon him.

When the advent of so singular a champion was announced to the frivolous Charles, he burst into a loud fit of laughter. Though he was in the condition in which men catch at straws, there was something in this affair which appeared to him ludicrous, and if he entertained it, likely to cast ridicule upon him and his cause. Some of his counsellors advised him to see her; others treated the proposition as the height of absurdity. For three days the court continued divided, and Charles unable to decide. At length it was agreed that she should be admitted; and to test her pretensions to superhuman direction, Charles was to pass for a private person, and one of the princes to represent him. But Joan discovered the king at a glance; and, walking up to him with serious and unembarrassed air, through all the crowd of staring courtiers, bent her knee, and said—"God give you good life, gentle king." Charles was surprised, but replied, pointing to another part of the hall, "I am not the king; he is there."

"In the name of God," rejoined Joan, "it is not they, but you who are the king. I am, most noble king, Joan the maid, sent of God to aid you and the kingdom, and by his order I announce to you that you will be crowned in the city of Rheims."

Charles took her aside, and, after an earnest conversation with her, he declared that she had told him things which were known to no one but himself and God, and that he believed she was really sent for the delivery of France. Probably the monarch—who was not of a nature to be impressed with anything of an elevated order—had now caught the idea that the peasant girl was shrewd enough to use as a political engine. The next day she was shown in public on horseback. She appeared about seventeen; her figure was slender and graceful, and her hair fell in rich, jetty locks on her shoulders. She ran a course with a lance, and managed her horse with the utmost address. The people were struck with admiration, and with loud shouts testified their belief in her.

But the timid Charles again hesitated, and conveyed her to Poictiers to be examined before the parliament by the most learned doctors and subtle theologians. For three weeks she was interrogated and cross-questioned in all ways. Every kind of erudite trap was laid for her, but in vain. She had but one story: that she was sent to raise the siege of Orleans, and to crown the king in Rheims, now in the hands of his enemies. When asked for a miracle, she replied, "Send me to Orleans, with an escort of men-at-arms, and you shall see the true sign of the truth of my mission—the raising of the siege." When not before the council, she passed her time in retirement and prayer. Having passed the most searching ordeal of the prelates and doctors, and the repeated application of holy water, she was once more brought out, armed cap-à-pie, with her banner borne before her, and equipped at all points like a knight. Mounted on a white charger, she ran a tilt with a lance, keeping such a firm seat, and displaying so steady an eye, that the soldiers and watching multitudes were enraptured.

The people of Orleans sent express for instant aid, and implored that the maid should lead the reinforcement. She demanded an ancient sword which, she said, lay in a tomb in the church of St. Catherine, at Fierbois, which was sought for, found, and brought to her, having five crosses upon its blade. Thus armed, receiving the staff and rank of general, a brave knight, of the name of John Daulon, being appointed her esquire, with two pages and two heralds, the maid of Domremy set out with a body of troops conveying provisions to Orleans, and accompanied by some of the most famous commanders of France, Saintrailles, Gaucourt, La Hire, and others. No sooner did she come into their camp, than she instituted the most rigorous discipline. She expelled all the low women which followed it, and insisted on every soldier confessing his sins and taking the sacrament.

And here, having seen this extraordinary maiden setting out on her grand enterprise, destined to be as successful as it was unexampled, we may remark that, as this event stands alone in history, having no parallel in any country, so it has been a sore puzzle and stumbling-block to the historians. Compelled to concede the pure and noble character of Joan, and the completeness of her success, they have one and all hastened to free themselves from a suspicion of crediting for a moment the means by which she claimed to accomplish it. They are all unanimous in declaring that there was nothing superhuman in those means, that they were merely the effects of Joan's heated imagination. Hume might be expected to abjure everything allied to miracle or the marvellous; but Lingard, the Catholic historian, belonging to a church which, in all ages, has professed the most unbounded credence in the direct agency of the saints, is equally prompt to assure us that "the enthusiast mistook for realities the workings of her own imagination."

If we were to ask these historians whether they believe that God really does guide the destinies of nations, and really from age to age inspires his creatures as legislators,

governors, orators, and poets, with the spirit which lives and works in them the achievement of the liberties and advancement of the race, they would undoubtedly reply in the affirmative. If you asked them again whether, supposing the Almighty did send forth some human being to accomplish a great mission for the benefit of a nation, the best proofs of the authenticity of that mission would not be the fitness of the character of the agent to the mission, the agreement betwixt the end announced in the outset and its realisation, they would undoubtedly again reply in the affirmative. Then it may be safely asserted that all these desiderata meet in Joan of Arc. What she declared that she was sent of God to do, she did; that and nothing more, and nothing less. It was to raise the siege of Orleans and crown the king at Rheims; both of them, so far as human calculation then went, all but impossibilities. Had she failed in these objects, or had she sought to compass them by wild and fanatical means, there would have been just evidence of the non-authenticity of her mission. But her moral character, by the consent of all cotemporary historians of credit, was singular for its extreme beauty and purity; and the character of her mind was equally remarkable for simple good sense and singleness of purpose. There was no craziness about her, no expectation of direct miraculous assistance. The only aid that she expected was that accompaniment of the Divine power which kindles the soul of the multitude, and raises it to the necessary pitch of great achievement. The same power and afflatus which all great men in all ages have believed in, as that which enabled them to do their noblest actions in the service of mankind,—that for which they confidently pray in all times of serious need. Judged by these tests, we have no right to deny to Joan of Arc the title which she claimed, of being an authentic instrument of Providence for the restoration of her nation. For nearly a hundred years that nation had been torn to fragments by foreign invaders and domestic faction. No princes, however powerful, no statesmen, however wise, no generals, however great, no armies, however brave or numerous, had been able to stem the tide of crime and calamity, and heal the sickness of the realm. Joan of Arc, a simple country girl, came forward, declared that she was sent of God to raise the siege of Orleans, and to crown the king in Rheims. She did it, and thus revived the spirit of the nation, and led to its ultimate restoration. What is still more striking is, that when she was induced, and in a manner compelled, to exceed her mission,—when she had with tears implored to be allowed to return home, having nothing more to do, and was refused, her power was gone for ever. Like Samson when his locks were shorn, like Saul when the prophet had pronounced the penalty of his disobedience, the spell of her victory was broken, and the infallible clearness of her mental vision had disappeared. Yet Providence had not the less effected his purpose. The time was come when the foreign oppression of France should cease; and as He sets bounds to the mighty ocean by the apparently feeble agency of sand, He set the limits of the English invasion, when all the physical and intellectual force of France had failed, by the feeble hand of a peasant maiden.

Joan was on her march to Orleans, and the fame of the holy maid had run before her. At first it was received by the English host with laughter and sneers, then with a secret dread, and finally with paralysing terror. Joan assumed the absolute command, and ordered the troops to move as her "voices" directed. She declared that they must advance straight upon Orleans along the right bank. Dunois, who had not faith enough in Joan to take that route where he knew that he should encounter the chief forces of the English, marched along the left bank; and then, taking a boat, conducted the maid up the river into the city. The troops following attempted to do the same; but, singularly enough, they were driven back by the winds, and compelled, after all, to take the route originally ordered by the maid. The besiegers lay as if under a spell; and the convoy with its provisions entered the city.

The famishing people of Orleans received Joan of Arc with enthusiastic acclamations and blazing torches. They believed that deliverance was come to them from Heaven, and they were right. A splendid banquet was offered to Joan, but she declined it, retiring to the house of Bouchier, the treasurer to the duke of Orleans, where she supped simply on bread dipped in wine; and there she remained during her stay in Orleans, keeping the wife and daughter of Bouchier constantly about her, to prevent any aspersions on her fair fame.

The strangest terror fell over the English soldiers. They had heard of nothing for two months but the coming of this maid, who had written to their commanders, telling them she was ordained by God to drive them out of France. The French had proclaimed her as sent by Heaven; the English officers, with curses, had sworn that she came from the devil. This, which they thought would completely destroy her with the soldiers, was the very thing which fixed her power over them. They would, probably, have cared nothing for her professed divine mission; but they at once gave credit to her alliance with Satan, and declared that flesh and blood they did not fear, but they were no match for the arch-fiend. In vain the commanders, who saw their error, endeavoured to remove this impression by representing Joan as a low-born, ignorant wench, and no better than she should be, who was got up by the French to frighten them: the mischief was done; in their eyes Joan was a witch of the first order, and wherever she appeared the soldiers fled. The subjects of Burgundy, who was himself no longer cordial in the cause, stole away from the camp on all sides; and the numbers necessary for the blockade of the town became deficient. The French now went in and out with impunity. A large store of provisions had arrived at Blois, which Charles constituted a depôt for the supply of Orleans. Joan marched out at the head of a very strong body, attended by the Bastard of Orleans, the Sieur Daulon, La Hire, and other generals. Her banner of white silk, bordered with fleur-de-lis of silver, and on one side bearing an image of the Almighty, on the other the words "Jhesus Maria," was borne before her. After came a body of priests bearing another banner, and chanting their anthems; and in this manner, glittering in her bright armour, and mounted on her milk-white steed, the maid rode forth in the very face of the English, who lay still, as if stricken into stone. Thus she went to Blois, and returned with fresh troops and means of defence.

Joan now mounted a tower opposite to the Tournelles, and called to the English, bidding them begone from France, or worse would befall them. Sir William Gladisdale

JOAN OF ARC AT THE ASSAULT OF THE TOURNELLES. (See page 578.)

replied from the Tournelles, abusing her for a witch and an abandoned woman, bidding her go back to her cows. "Base knight!" said Joan, "thou thyself shalt never pass hence, but shalt surely be slain." She now commanded a general assault on the bastiles; but the generals, who were becoming jealous of Joan's fame, resolved to try their fortune without her. They told her they would commence the attack the next day, and Joan retired to lie down and take some repose. Soon she started up, and called for her arms, saying the voices summoned her to fight, and rushing forth she met the soldiers returning from a sortie, which had been made without her knowledge, and in which the French were repulsed with slaughter.

Joan was greatly enraged, and now led on the forces herself. Successively the bastiles of St. Loup, St. Jean le Blanc, and Augustus fell before her. The attack was then led against the main fortress, the Tournelles. Joan led the way, severely reprimanding Gaucourt, the governor of the city, for his disobedience to her orders, and threatening to put him or any one to death who opposed her. The people and soldiers, who worshipped her, and whom she would not permit to follow her unless they had confessed and observed strict decorum, stood to a man in her support, and she led the way to the Tournelles, sword in hand. Three times the French attacked the tower with all their force and engines, but the English this time defended themselves manfully, and with their artillery and arrows mowed down the French, clearing the bridge and river bank of them. Nothing daunted by the terrible carnage, and declaring that the English were given by God into the hands of the French, Joan seized a scaling-ladder, and, amid a hail of shot and flying shafts, advanced to the foot of the tower, planted her ladder, and began to ascend. An arrow struck her, piercing her armour between the chest and shoulder, and she fell into the ditch. The English gave a great shout at the sight, and Joan, supposed to be dead, was borne away into the rear. Finding that the maid was alive, the arrow was extracted, and feeling all the weakness of the woman during the operation, Joan cried in agony; but, once over, she fell on her knees in prayer, and rose up as if wholly refreshed, declaring it was not blood but glory which flowed from her wound, and that the voices called her to finish her victory. The combat recommenced with augmented fury; the English, confounded at the reappearance of the maid, gave way, and Gladisdale and all his knights were put to the sword, as Joan had predicted.

That night Suffolk held a council of war, and such appeared the discouragement of his troops, that it was resolved to abandon the siege, and man all the fortresses along the river. Accordingly the next day he drew out all his forces, and placed them in battle array. Determining to make a show of resistance while in the very act of drawing off, he sent a challenge into the city, bidding the French, now so much superior in numbers as they were, to come with their Joan, and, were she harlot, witch, or prophetess, they would fight her in a fair field. It was Sunday; Joan forbade the French to quit the city, but to spend the day in worshipping God, who had given them the victory. Suffolk waited for some hours in vain, when he gave the concerted signal, and all the long line of forts, the creation of such months of labour, burst into flames, and the soldiers, dejected and crest-fallen, marched away. Joan forbade any pursuit that day.

Thus the first of the two great things which Joan had promised was accomplished—the siege of Orleans was raised, and the maid, now honoured with the title of the Maid of Orleans, rode forth to meet the king at Blois. As she advanced through the country, the peasantry flocked on all sides to behold her, and crowded forward to touch her feet, her very garments, and, if unable to do that, were happy to touch her horse. By the court she was received with great honour, and the king proposed to entertain her with a magnificent banquet. But Joan told him that it was no time for feasting and dancing; she had much yet to do for France, and but little time to do it in, for her voices told her that she should die within two years. She called on Charles now to advance with her to Rheims, where she must crown him, and leave the English and Burgundians, who were safe in the hand of God.

Charles put himself at the head of his forces, and collected all his power on the banks of the Loire. He proposed, however, first to clear the enemy from their strongholds, and afterwards to march to Rheims. His army, led on by the maid, invested the town of Jargeau, where Suffolk, the commander-in-chief, lay, and within ten days the place was carried by storm, and Suffolk himself taken prisoner. In this triumphant action Joan, as usual, led the way. She was the first to scale the wall of the city, but on her head appearing above it, she received a blow which precipitated her into the ditch. She was severely bruised, but not killed; and as she lay on the ground, unable to raise herself, she cried, "Forward, countrymen! fear nothing; the Lord has delivered them into our hands." The soldiers, fired to enthusiasm by her heroism and her confident words, rushed on and took the place. Three hundred of the garrison lay dead. Six thousand of the English had fallen at Orleans; and a panic seized them everywhere. The lord Talbot, who was now left in command, hastily evacuated the different ports and towns, and retreated towards Paris.

At Patay he was met by a reinforcement of four thousand men, and made a stand. Sir John Fastolfe, who had brought these troops, advised further retreat, but Talbot refused. While the commanders debated the point the French were upon them; and Talbot, who saw himself on a flat, open country, endeavoured, but too late, to secure his rear by a village and fenced enclosures. On the other side the French commanders, dreading an attack of the English in the open field, remembering Azincourt and Verneuil, advised waiting for additional cavalry, but Joan indignantly exclaimed, "Have you not good spears? Ride on, in the name of the Lord; the English are delivered into my hands, you have only to smite them!" So saying, she led the way in charge, and the men clamoured to follow. La Hire and Saintrailles dashed on with the maid, and broke into the very midst of the English before they had time to form. Never, for many a day, had the French beheld such a sight. The archers, those terrible men, who on all occasions had mowed them down like corn before the scythe, had not time now to fix their stakes. They were driven pell-mell amongst the horse; all was confusion. Sir John Fastolfe, without striking a blow, led off his division, and the brave Talbot, fighting amid mountains of his slain soldiers, was taken, with the lords Scales and Hungerford, and the bulk of the officers. Twelve hundred of the English lay dead on the field. The French were in

ecstacies at their wonderful success, and Bedford, enraged at the conduct of Fastolfe, stripped him of the honour of the garter, and pronounced him disgraced and degraded. But Fastolfe, who had shown on too many occasions his valour, and who was probably influenced by his prudent council having been rejected by Suffolk, declared that to have led men so thoroughly bewitched as his were, by their fears of the maid, into action, was just to submit them to infamy and butchery; and Bedford, growing cooler, forgave him.

In this moment of victory Joan again urged on Charles to march to Rheims, and be crowned. At this the contemptible king, who on all occasions of danger kept aloof, shrank back. The distance was great, the whole way was full of strong towns in the hands of the English and Burgundians. All his officers supported him in this view, but the undaunted maid upbraided them with their want of faith, after so many wondrous proofs of the truth of her promises. They had never dared to think of relieving Orleans till she recommended it, but they had now done it; they had feared to fight at Patay, but they had followed her and won the battle; and now they had only to advance, for the powers of Heaven went before them, and unmanned their enemies.

She strove wisely to reconcile Charles to the constable, the count of Richemont, whom Tremoille, the king's favourite, hated and feared; but in vain. Not only Richemont with his troops, but many other knights were refused attendance in the court, and with these diminished forces Charles set forward on the road to Rheims. But everywhere the fortified towns fell before them. Auxerre made a treaty of submission, but Troyes for a time held out. As the soldiers suffered greatly in the siege for want of provisions, they began to lose faith in Joan, and openly to insult her as a foul witch. The murmurs of the base soldiery were quickly seized upon by the archbishop of Rheims, who had always expressed his disbelief in Joan's inspiration, and the poor maid was summoned before the counsel, and interrogated like a criminal. But with a simple and undaunted eloquence she made the leaders feel ashamed of their doubts. She challenged them to follow her to the walls, and see them surmounted, and she prevailed. With bags of earth and fagots the soldiers filled up the ditch, and were preparing with scaling-ladders to pour over the walls in a frenzy of enthusiasm, when a parley was demanded by the besieged, and the notorious friar Richard, who figured so much in the camp from this time, made terms of surrender. As Joan was in the act of passing the city gate at the head of the troops, the friar, still believing that he had to do with an imp of Satan, crossed himself in great agitation with many crosses, and sprinkled holy-water on the threshold of the gate. Instead of seeing the maid resolve herself into a hideous demon and vanish away, or find herself unable to cross the threshold, he beheld her march on calm and unmoved; and at once he pronounced her an angel, and all the people flocked round with admiring wonder. From that hour friar Richard became a zealous ally of the king, though often relapsing into doubt of the maid and into bigoted opposition to her. He now, however, went on preaching to the people of the neighbouring towns to rise in defence of the king, and drive out the Burgundians. Chalons sent Charles the keys of the town, and on arriving at Rheims, he found that the people had risen at the approach of the celestial maid, had driven out the adherents of Bedford and Burgundy, and received him with open arms. A grand procession of priests waited to accompany the king and the maid into the city, and on the 15th of July, 1429, Charles and Joan, attended by all the chief officers, marched into the city, preceded by the banners of the church, and amid the sound of its hymns. Two days after this, Charles VII. was crowned in the cathedral, as the maid had promised him.

Not one of the peers of France was present, for the pusillanimous conduct of the king, and the shameless reign of the favourite Tremoille, had disgusted them; but the people flocked round in joy, and anticipation of better days. They had unbounded faith in the maid, and wherever she appeared they saw hosts of beautiful white butterflies hovering around her standard, and they knelt in devout awe of the sacred words and devices painted upon it. With that banner in her hand, Joan stood beside the king, while the archbishop placed the crown upon his head. When that was done she prostrated herself at his feet, embraced them with tears, and reminded him that there and then her mission was terminated. All that she had promised in the name of God, God had performed; her work she declared was done, and she implored permission to retire at once to her father's house, and her old way of life.

But in entering on so stupendous a mission as the salvation of the nation, an humble village girl like Joan had inevitably entered on the field of martyrdom. No person, however dignified by station or by talents, could, on the ground of a divine ordination, have long—however complete her success—stood safe amid the jealousies of courts and the meaner passions of human nature. From such a career there could be no retreat but through death. The same voices which she invariably avowed had called her to the enterprise, had pronounced her early doom. The enthusiasm of the multitude is short-lived; the envy and the hatred of the military chiefs, scarcely suppressed during the hour of triumph, were eternal in their nature. Before the victorious maid all their honours had been prostrated in the dust. In a few short months she had done what all their united talents and exertions had failed to do in a generation. She had snatched the prestige of invincibility from the English, and raised the spirit of France. That must be inevitably avenged.

Meantime she was too indispensable to the completion of the conquest of France. Charles resolutely refused to listen to her tears and prayers to be permitted to withdraw. But from that hour the maid was no longer the same. The spirit had departed from her. The voices ceased, and the clear, bold, and unerring judgment which had borne her on was gone. She was dejected, and full of distress. When importuned to direct what should next be done, she was uncertain and confused, which she never had been before. Acting now on her own suggestions, she ordered, doubted her orders, and retracted them. Again and again she declared, with tears and violent emotion, that she had nothing more to do, her work was finished, and she prayed for her dismissal. The officers did not neglect to make their advantage out of this. They treated her with harshness and undisguised insult. They encouraged the soldiers to call her foul names, and they did not hesitate to make the most infamous attempts on her honour, in order to ruin her influence for ever. These attempts Joan

repelled with the fury of a woman who felt that she had deserved far different treatment. In all her camp life she had invariably kept female companions of the strictest character about her. She always had a female friend to share her bed; if during assaults that was impossible, she lay down in her complete armour. So jealous was she of her reputation, so inviolable in her adherence to her vow of chastity.

Sad and woeful was now the condition of the maid who had done such wonders for France. Bedford was exerting himself to the utmost to check this unexampled progress of the French. Cardinal Beaufort came over with two thousand archers and two hundred and fifty men-at-arms. Every means was used to fix the alliance of the wavering Burgundy; who, however, gave no essential assistance. He had withdrawn his garrisons from Normandy, and the constable had seized them. Bedford was compelled to march himself from Paris to recover them; and the maid, who had hung up her arms in the church of St. Denis, at Rheims, as the sign that her mission was over, was induced by the king to assume them again. Once in her old panoply, her courage, if not her confidence, seemed to revive. She advised the monarch to march on Paris while Bedford was absent. She led the way, and Soissons, Senlis, Beauvais, and St. Denis opened their gates. At the assault on the Faubourg St. Honoré, Joan was again wounded, and left in the ditch for hours. Charles, mortified at the repulse, retired in dudgeon to Bourges; and Joan, again hanging up her armour, implored her dismissal. Charles refused, and endeavoured to fix her in his interest by granting her a patent of nobility, with an income equal to that of an earl, and freed her native parish of Domremy from all taxation for ever. The unhappy maid went on; but her voices were gone, and she was no longer a safe oracle. During the winter, indeed, friar Richard had brought forward his rival prophetess—one Catherine of Rochelle—who undertook, not to fight, but to raise money for the king, by preaching to the populace and revealing hidden treasures. Joan refused any connection with her, declaring that success lay at the point of the lance.

In May, 1430, Joan was sent to raise the siege of Compeigne, which was invested by the duke of Burgundy, She fought her way into the city with her accustomed valour; but, in making a sortie, was deserted by her followers, and, bravely fighting her way back to the city, just as she approached the gates, she was dragged from her horse by an archer, and, as she lay on the ground, she surrendered to the Bastard of Vendôme.

The news of the capture of the terrible maid flew like lightning through the Burgundian camp. All the officers of the army ran to gaze at her, the duke himself amongst them. Monstrelet, the historian, who recounts these transactions, was present on the occasion.

And now came the dark termination to this brilliant and wonderful episode in the history of these wars of France—even that which Joan herself had foretold. The base king of France, for whom she had wrought such incredible advantages, abandoned her to the tender mercies of her enemies without an effort. When the news reached the English quarters, they sang *Te Deum* in their exultation. Their joy we can conceive, but it is difficult in these times to comprehend the savage and ungenerous vengeance of all parties, which simultaneously displayed itself against the noble heroine. It might have been supposed that the admiration of a brave foe would have been felt in the bosoms of brave warriors; and, above all, that a young and pure woman, who had achieved such unexampled deeds, would, at least, have met with respect. But to comprehend the feelings with which the captive damsel was regarded on all hands, we must descend into the gloom of a dark and bitter age—an age when the moral standard was sunk to the lowest degree by a long course of unparalleled vices, atrocities, and meannesses. England had been cut short at the very moment of her apparent attainment of her long-cherished views in France. Her proudest nobles and generals had been defeated by a simple shepherdess; the church had been equally shorn of its proud assumptions; for Joan had avowedly not gone to bishops, but to God. Army, church, and state were all, therefore, on flame to wreak their vengeance on this poor, unfortunate little maiden.

The pope Martin demanded her that he might consign her to the benign offices of the Holy Inquisition. But the Bastard of Vendôme had sold his captive to John of Luxembourg, and he sold her to the English for ten thousand francs. During the winter she lay in prison, her friends seeming wholly to have forgotten her, and her enemies on every side ravening for her destruction. It might have been thought that she had been guilty of some enormous crime, instead of the salvation of her country. There was one general cry for her being burnt as a witch; and so fierce was the popular feeling in Paris against her, that a poor woman was actually burnt for merely saying that she believed Joan had been sent by Heaven. She was carried from one dungeon to another, to Beaurevoir, to Arras, to Crotoy, and, finally, to Rouen. There the bishop of Beauvais, a man devoted to the English interests, claimed to conduct her trial. He was a servile tool of Bedford, through him hoping for preferment; and Bedford had long declared that Joan was "a disciple and limb of the fiend;" and, therefore, the result was quite certain. Her trial was opened on the 13th of February, 1431.

On sixteen different days Joan was brought before the court, and interrogated with all the subtlety of the most celebrated priests, doctors, and lawyers that could be found. There were upwards of a hundred of these grave, learned men arrayed against this simple girl. They tried every means of entrapping her into admissions of the evil agency of her spiritual prompters; but the noble damsel remained calm, clear, and undaunted in her demeanour. It was in vain that they sought to induce her to confess that she had been misled or mistaken: she adhered throughout to her one simple story; maintained her firm opinion that it was God, and God only, who had directed her; and often puzzled and confounded her judges. When they interrogated her as to her attachment to the church, she reminded them of her constant resort to its altars and services; but she made the fatal confession that when her voices gave different advice she followed them, as of higher authority than the church.

The court condemned her as an impious heretic and impostor; and the parliament of Paris and the university, besides various eminent prelates who were consulted, confirmed the justice of the sentence.

The treatment of poor Joan in prison was still more

infamous than in open court. When condemned as a heretic to be burned, her cell was haunted by monks and confessors, who described her death to her in the most terrible language, and wearied her with entreaties to confess and escape so frightful a death. A woman's fears at length got the better of her: she consented, and was brought out publicly in the cemetery of St. Ouon, where a friar addressed her before the assembled English and Burgundians, and the crowded citizens of Rouen, describing the enormity of her crimes, and the infamy of her conduct as a woman. Joan bore all this in patience; but when the preacher proceeded to defame the king, her loyalty broke out, and she defended him. Her punishment was commuted to perpetual imprisonment, and to be fed "on the bread of sorrow and the water of affliction."

But this did not satisfy the vengeful longings of her enemies. To her mitigated sentence was attached an oath which she swore, never, on penalty of death, again to assume male attire. This was made a snare for her. During her sleep her own garments were taken away, and those of a man put in their place. On discovering them the poor damsel is said to have continued to lie in bed till the demands of nature compelled her to rise. She then put on some portion of the only attire left her, and no sooner was that the case, than her guards, who were on the watch, rushed in, and conducted her, thus arrayed, to the officers. On this forced breach of her oath, judgment of death by fire, as a relapsed heretic, was at once pronounced; and on the 30th of May she was brought to the stake in the little market-place, since called the Place de la Pucelle, in memory of her.

When she had been conducted back to her cell, after her second condemnation, she confessed her guilt to God in that she had been weak enough to deny the power by which He had led her to do His will for France. Her "voices" came back to her; she was filled with new courage, and with beautiful visions. When she was brought out, and saw the horrible apparatus of death, her fortitude failed her, and she was led, struggling and sobbing, to the stake. When she saw the fire kindled, she grasped a crucifix, with which she was furnished, convulsively — called loudly on the Almighty for support—and she was thus seen when the dense smoke enveloped her, praying fervently to Christ for mercy. Even the austere cardinal Beaufort, who was present, seated in a gallery opposite, could not bear the scene, but rose hastily and rushed away, with his attendant bishops, in tears.

Thus perished the most pure, noble, and remarkable heroine in history, for the crime of saving her country, when little more than twenty years of age. Numbers of her companions, of all ranks, were living when her history was written, who all united in testimony to the purity of her life, and the wonder of her deeds. Her ashes were scattered on the Seine, but twenty-five years later the infamous judgment which had been passed upon her was reversed by the archbishop of Rheims and the bishop of Paris. Montaigne saw the house where she was born in 1580, the whole of its front emblazoned with paintings of her history. After the revolution it was converted into a stable. The infamy of her death rests with imperishable blackness upon all parties who permitted or perpetrated it, French, English, and Burgundians. The very historians who deny her mission are so impressed by her greatness, that they declare that antiquity would have erected altars and statues to her.

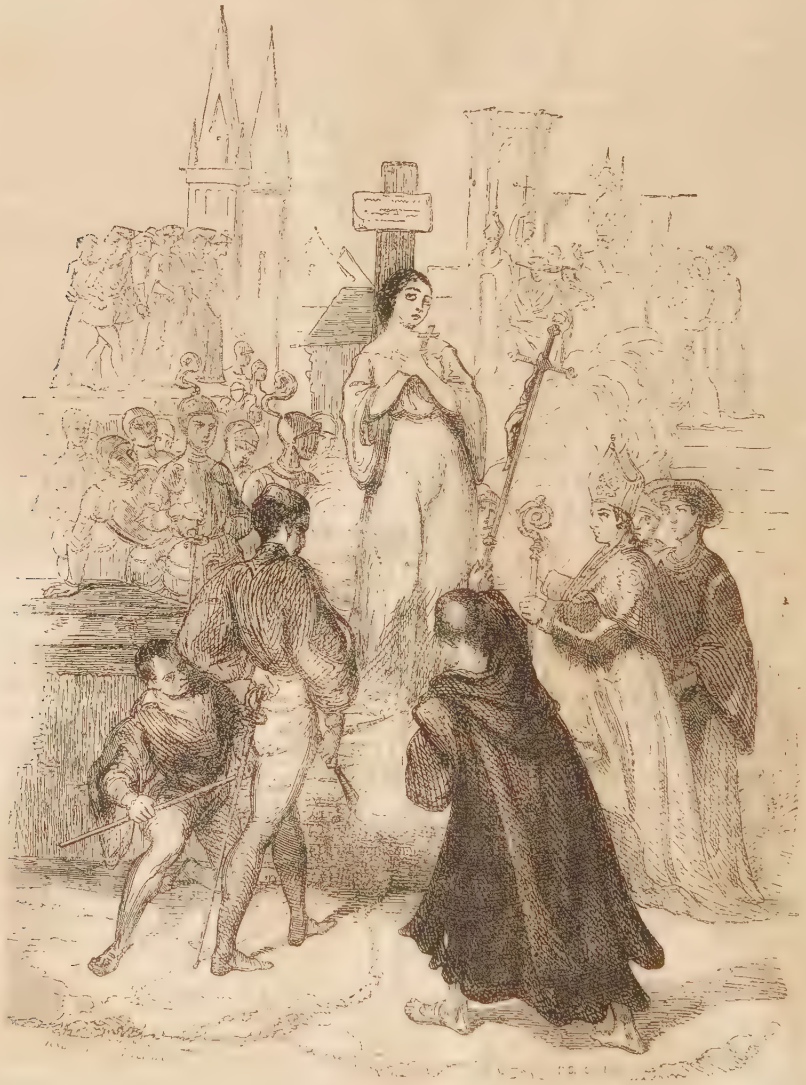
To the English the death of Joan of Arc brought no remission of the Divine fiat gone out against them. Their fortunes continued to decline, their friends to fall away. The great work which at that period was required in France, and which the mission of Joan was no doubt intended to effect, was to renew the spirit of the nation; to break the crushing spell of inferiority to the enemy, which acted like a nightmare on the people; and, above all, to inspire a respect for purity of morals and probity of principle. The condition of society for the last century had been corrupt and demoralised beyond example. The beautiful example of the steadfast faith and moral purity, the undaunted courage and prompt action of this extraordinary young woman, was a great lesson to the nation of what it needed, and what it might attain. The moral tuition was the most difficult, but the revelation made by her bravery was not lost. The French saw that the English were vulnerable; that however wise and able was the regent, he had not the authority, if he had the genius of the late king. At home there were the impetuous Gloucester and the ambitious Beaufort, paralysing his proceedings and disuniting the nation. The new soul which Joan of Arc had awoke in France was soon visible enough in its effects, and, aided by the growing embarrassments in England, never ceased till it had done what Joan predicted—driven the English entirely out of France.

The ceremony of the coronation of Charles VII. at Rheims appearing to give him a more confirmed title to the crown of France in the eyes of the people, Bedford resolved to crown Henry of England also there. Henry was now in his tenth year, a boy amiable but weakly, both in body and mind. He had received the royal unction in Westminster; and from that moment the title of protector was dropped, and that of prime counsellor only given to Gloucester. Both France and England had at this period so completely exhausted themselves by their wars, that it was six months before money could be raised sufficient to defray the expenses of Henry's coronation journey. It was then procured by loan. Gloucester was appointed the king's lieutenant during his absence; and Beaufort, cardinal of Winchester, accompanied him. Henry proceeded to Rouen; but the boast of Bedford that he would crown him in Rheims appeared every day farther from any prospect of accomplishment; and, after eighteen months' abode of the king at Rouen, it was resolved to crown him in Paris. From Pontoise to Paris the youthful king, accompanied by the principal English nobles and three thousand horse, advanced in state; and great processions of the clergy, the members of parliament, the magistrates, and citizens came out to meet him. Triumphal arches were erected, and various devices were exhibited, mysteries enacted, and a show of festivity presented; but the whole was hollow. There was no real joy on such a ceremony, which, to the Parisians, was but a mark of subjugation to a foreign yoke. The whole aspect of the affair was English, not French. The cardinal of Winchester, an English prelate, performed the ceremony; the great officers of state surrounding the throne were English. Not a single prince or peer of France condescended to attend on the occasion—not even Burgundy, the ally of the young monarch. When crowned, there was no loyal desire to retain the monarch amongst them. He

was evidently not at home there, and, after a few days, Henry returned to Rouen, where he resided a year, and, after a visit to Calais, returned to London.

Meantime the disposition of the French people to return to the allegiance of their own prince, became still more conspicuous in the provinces than in the capital. The atrocious cruelty of the English to their heroine, though it had been passively permitted by the government, revolted and incensed the people. Everywhere the new spirit which she had evoked showed itself in the greater daring and success of the French generals. Dunois surprised and took Chartres. Lord Willoughby was defeated at St. Celerin sur Sarte. The fair of Caen, the capital of Normandy itself, was pillaged by D e Lore, a French officer; and Dunois, emboldened by his success, even compelled the duke of Bedford to raise the siege of Lagni.

But, far beyond these petty advantages, every day demonstrated that the unnatural alliance of the duke of Burgundy with England against his own sovereign was hastening to an end. Nothing but the duke's resentment against Charles for the murder of his father could have led him to this alliance, and nothing but the decided ascendency of the English for a time could have retained him in it. That ascendency was evidently shaken; the English influence was on the wane; the spirit of the French people was rising in bolder form against it; and Charles, who seemed at length to acquire a politic character, made earnest overtures to the duke for reconciliation. Charles did not hesitate to express his deep regret for the death of the duke's father. His envoys pleaded his youth at the time—the overgrown power of those about him—his inability to guide or prevent their actions. He made the most solemn assurances that that base deed had been planned wholly without his privity, and was regarded by him with disgust and abhorrence. In proof of his sincerity it was shown that he had dismissed and banished the bloody perpetrator of the deed, Tannegui du Chastel, and all his accomplices, and he offered to make every atonement in his power.



Burning of Joan of Arc.

DEATH OF CARDINAL BEAUFORT.

The humiliations and distresses to which Charles had long been subjected had gratified the revenge of Burgundy, and he was now sufficiently cool to perceive as clearly as any one that nothing in reality could be more fatal to his interests than the union of France and England under one crown. The English had already given him more than one cause of offence; he did not forget that Bedford had refused to surrender the government of the duchy of Orleans to him when it had been given him by the English council. And now, while Charles was assiduously courting him, and he was in this tone of mind, Bedford unluckily added fresh and deep cause of resentment.

Ann of Burgundy, duchess of Bedford, sister of Philip, died at Paris, in November, 1432. Here was snapped a bond of union which, by the judicious endeavours of the duchess, had proved a strong one. In two months after her death, Bedford, who could not plead the impetuosity or thoughtlessness of youth, married Jaquetta of Luxembourg, a vassal of Burgundy, and that without giving the slightest announcement of his intention to the duke. Burgundy felt the proceeding a direct insult to the memory of his sister, and probably Bedford was quite as conscious of the fact, and, therefore, had omitted to communicate his intention to Philip. Philip expressed his resentment in no measured terms, and Bedford retorted with equal indignation. There were numerous individuals at the Burgundian court ready to fan the flame of dissension. The count of Richemont and the duke of Brittany had long been striving to carry over Philip to the French side. The duke of Bourbon, who had also married a sister of Philip, threw his weight most joyfully into the scale.

The cardinal of Winchester, who, whatever his feuds with Gloucester, had long been giving the most prudent counsel, in the exhausted state of the finances of both countries, to attempt a peace, now saw with consternation this quarrel, which threatened to throw Burgundy into the arms of Charles, and thus augment immensely the difficulties of England. He hastened to interpose his good offices, and prevailed upon the two incensed princes to consent to a meeting at St. Omer. But here the old proverb of bringing a horse to water was seen in its full force. Each duke expected that the other should make the first visit. Bedford stood upon his being the son, brother, and uncle to a king, and Philip upon the greatness of his own independent dominions. Neither would condescend to make the first move, and they parted with only increased bitterness. Bedford, in this case, permitted his pride to sway him from his usual prudence, and, though he did not live long, it was long enough to cause him deeply to repent his folly.

The duke of Burgundy was now quite prepared to reconcile himself to Charles. A point of honour only stood in the way, and diplomacy is never at a loss to get rid of such little obstacles. By the treaty of Troyes he was solemnly sworn never to make peace with Charles without consent of the English. To surmount this difficulty either by establishing an actual peace between the three parties, or by so far putting the English in the wrong as to justify in the eyes of the world a peace without it, it was suggested by his brothers-in-law, Richemont and Bourbon, to endeavour to get up a congress under the mediation of the pope, as the common friend and father of all Christian princes. Eugenius IV. set himself with alacrity to effect this desirable but difficult work, and prevailed so far as to have a grand congress summoned to meet at Arras, in August, 1435.

To give effect to this assembly, care was taken to render it the most illustrious convocation of princes and diplomatists which Europe had yet seen. The pontiff sent as his representative the cardinal of Santa Croce; the council of Basil, then sitting, also delegated the cardinal of Cyprus. The duke of Burgundy, one of the most powerful, and by far the most magnificent prince of the age, came, attended by all the nobility of his states. Beaufort, cardinal of Winchester, represented his relative, the king of England, attended by twenty-six nobles, half English and half French. Charles VII. appointed as his plenipotentiaries the duke of Bourbon and the constable Richemont, who were attended by twenty-nine peers and ministers. Besides these there came envoys from Norway, Denmark, Poland, and Sicily, from many of the German and Italian states, and from the cities of Flanders, and of the Hanseatic League.

If the object was to exhibit the hauteur and unreasonableness of England, rather than that of showing the enormous difficulties in the way, the stratagem fully succeeded. All Europe almost was brought together with much cost and with much parade to note the result, and the feeling would, of consequence, be proportionate. This brilliant gathering of princes and delegates opened their proceedings by a series of fêtes, tournaments, and galas; but even in these the good understanding between the French and Burgundians was so undisguised as to augur no favourable termination of the affairs which brought the congress together. The conference was opened in the abbey of St. Vaast by the cardinal of Santa Croce, with the usual lamentations over the horrors of war, and eulogies on the blessings of peace. But when the propositions on both sides came to be laid before the assembly they were found to be wide as the poles asunder. The French plenipotentiaries offered to cede Guienne and Normandy to the English, but subject to all the conditions of homage and vassalage. The English, who were not disposed to abate a jot their demands of independent possession of all the lands they now held in France, were so indignant at what they considered the arrogance of this proposal, that they abruptly refused to submit any counter-proposition of their own, but rose and left the assembly. On this there was a general outcry against the intolerable pride and unreasonableness of the English. The fact was, that the two cardinals, who came openly as mediators, were in reality the decided partisans of France and Burgundy. Every means was now used to represent the conduct of the English in the most odious light, and a draft of a treaty ready prepared between Burgundy and France was openly produced, considered, and signed on the 21st of September. The English had already left Arras on the 6th.

No sooner was the ratification of this treaty made known, than universal rejoicings took place all over France and Burgundy. On the other hand, the English loaded the duke of Burgundy with the bitterest reproaches as a perjured violator of the treaty of Troyes. In London the indignation of the people was so intense that they fell on the Flemings, a numerous body of traders there, because they were subjects of Philip, and cruelly abused and murdered some of them. When Philip sent, *pro forma*, a herald to London to announce this treaty, and to apologise for his

abandonment of that of Troyes, the council received him with great marks of indignity, and in studied insult assigned him his lodgings at a shoemaker's. These violent proceedings were as unworthy of a great country as they were propitious to the cause of Burgundy. His breach of a solemn treaty was notorious; these outrages went to justify him. He had felt the odium of his own movement so much as to obtain from the cardinals, in full assembly of the congress, a solemn absolution for all his oaths to the English. So notorious had been the repeated perjuries of almost all concerned in that new alliance, that the lord of Lannoy, when it came to his turn to swear, had exclaimed, "This is the sixth peace to which I have sworn since the commencement of the war. The others are all broken; but as for this, whatever others do, I declare before God I will observe it."

Charles, on his part, had been compelled not only to implore Philip's forgiveness of the murder of his father, but to surrender to Burgundy all the towns of Picardy lying between the Somme and the Low Countries, with other territories, to be held for life without fealty or homage. The sacrifices of honour and domain had been enough between the parties to lay the foundation for future heart-burnings, had the English but acted with tolerable policy; but their violent conduct tended to draw off a too scrutinising glance from the new allies, and to cement their union. To add to the mischief, Bedford died at Rouen immediately after receiving the news of this disastrous treaty. Bedford had, in the main, been an able and prudent manager of the English affairs in France, but he had not been a successful one. Circumstances had fought against him. The distractions of the council at home, and the consequent diminution of his resources, had crippled him. The strange apparition of the maid of Orleans had set at defiance all human counsels. His horrible execution of that innocent and most meritorious damsel had sullied his reputation for humanity, and his haughty conduct to the duke of Burgundy had equally injured the estimation of his political wisdom. The sudden rending of that old tie, and the power with which it invested France, probably hastened, as it undoubtedly darkened, his end. He was buried on the right hand of the high altar of the cathedral of Rouen, where his grave yet meets the eye of the English traveller; and the reputation which he won amongst his enemies in France is evidenced by the reply of Louis XI., who was entreated to remove his bones from so honourable a sepulchre:—"I will not war with the remains of a prince who was once a match for your fathers and mine; and who, were he now living, would make the proudest of us tremble. Let his ashes rest in peace, and may the Almighty have mercy on his soul!"

Three days after the signing of the treaty of Arras, died also Isabella of Bavaria, one of the most infamous women who ever figured in history. The deed which united her old ally Burgundy with her own son, whom she hated with a most unnatural hatred, was to her the crowning point of her deserved misfortunes. She left a memory equally abhorred by French and English.

The affairs of England in France demanded the utmost promptitude and address, but this important moment was wasted through the violence of the factions of Gloucester and Beaufort. The cardinal endeavoured to secure the appointment of his nephew Edmund Beaufort, afterwards duke of Somerset, as regent of France; but the duke of Gloucester insisted on the choice of Richard, duke of York, who was finally adopted; but not till six months of most invaluable time had been wasted. Before his arrival the French had profited by the delay to recover Meulon, Pontoise, and other places on the Seine. Richemont had been active in Normandy, exciting the people to revolt, and Dieppe was surprised. The duke of Burgundy, though his own subjects, who had much commerce with England, were averse to a war with it, and the people of Picardy, who had been made over to him were in rebellion, still was actively preparing for an attack on Calais. Paris had thrown off the English yoke. The Parisians had always been attached to the duke of Burgundy, and equally ready to renew their allegiance to Charles. In the night they opened the gates to Lisle Adam and the count Dunois; threw chains across the streets to prevent the entrance of the English, and the lord Willoughby, first retreating with his garrison to the Bastile, then made terms to evacuate the city.

The turn which was given to affairs immediately on the arrival of the duke of York showed what might have been done by a more prompt occupation of his post. The duke landed in Normandy with eight thousand men. He soon reduced the towns which had revolted or surrendered to the enemy. Talbot defeated a considerable army near Rouen; he retook Pontoise in the midst of a fall of snow by dressing a body of men in white, and concealing them in a ditch. He then advanced to Paris, and carried desolation to its very walls, but failed to take it.

Meantime the duke of Burgundy had invested Calais. The duke of Gloucester, with a fleet of five hundred sail, and carrying fifteen thousand men, set out to raise the siege, and landed at Calais on the 2nd of August, 1436. Philip did not wait for this army; he hastily abandoned the siege, or rather his troops—a wretched rabble of militia from Ghent, Bruges, Ypres, and other Flemish towns—abandoned him. They had fought too much with the English to venture to fight against them, and, at the first approach of Gloucester, they ran in a wild panic. The contagion became general, and the whole army, men-at-arms, archers, everything, thirty thousand in number, decamped with such precipitation as to leave behind them all their artillery, ammunition, and baggage. The count of Richemont, the constable of France, who had come to witness the recovery of Calais from the English, was borne away in the rueful flight to his infinite chagrin. Gloucester, who arrived four days after this disgraceful retreat, made instant pursuit, sending messengers to Philip to beg him to stop, as he had promised, and measure lances with him; but the humbled duke made no halt. The English now rushed furiously into Flanders, plundering town and country, the soldiers making a rich booty, and Gloucester paying the duke off the old scores incurred by his conduct to Gloucester's quondam wife, Jacqueline of Holland.

On the 3rd of January, 1437, died queen Catherine, the widow of Henry V. Soon after the death of Catherine's illustrious husband she retired to an obscurity which was scarcely broken during the remaining fifteen years of her life. She had fixed her affections on a handsome yeoman of the guard, Owen Tudor, a Welshman. This fortunate fellow, who thus became the father of a race of England's kings, was originally, it is believed, a common soldier. His father had been one of the followers of Owen Glendower, and he himself was at Azincourt with Henry V.,

where, for his bravery in repelling the fiery charge of the duke of Alençon, Henry made him one of the squires of his body. It was in this post, keeping guard at Windsor when Catherine retired there with the infant Henry VI., that he attracted the queen's attention. Spite of his humble origin and condition, for he could not then be worth forty pounds a year, or he must have taken up his knighthood, Catherine, the proud daughter of the kings of France, did not disdain to bestow upon him her favour, and, eventually, her hand. This marriage was, of course, concealed with all possible care. So completely was this the case, that no proof of it whatever exists, or has been discovered; not even the research of Henry VII., her grandson, with all his boast of royal descent, could obtain it. Yet no doubt whatever seems to have existed of the reality of the marriage. Gloucester, the protector, was highly incensed at this act of Catherine, regarding it as a disgrace to the royal family. It appears clearly that, though he was aware that the husband of Catherine was a plebeian, he was not aware of his identity, for Tudor continued to reside with the queen till about six months previous to her death.

Tudor and Catherine had four children, a daughter, who died in infancy, and three sons. These sons were torn from her at the instigation of Gloucester; and the queen was forced to seek refuge in the abbey of Bermondsey. After the queen's death, which occurred when she was only thirty-six, and in consequence, it is supposed, of the persecutions and troubles which her marriage brought upon her, Tudor was seized and imprisoned in Newgate, but escaped into Wales; was dishonourably seized again by Gloucester, notwithstanding a safe conduct from the king, and thrown into the dungeon of Wallingford Castle. Thence he was remanded again to Newgate, whence he once more escaped. He was admitted to some small favour by Henry VI., and made keeper of his parks in Denbigh, Wales; and was finally taken, fighting against him, by Edward IV., and beheaded in the market-place of Hereford. Such is the history of the origin of the royal line of Tudor, corrupted from Theodore, the original family name.

The three sons of Owen Tudor and Catherine were acknowledged and ennobled by Henry VI. The eldest, Edmund, was made earl of Richmond, married to Margaret Beaufort, the heiress of the house of Somerset, and took precedence of all peers. He died at the early age of twenty, yet left one infant son, afterwards Henry VII. The second son of Catherine, Jasper Tudor, was created earl of Pembroke. The third son became a monk of Westminster.

In France the English still continued to wage a various war, but not sufficiently brilliant to give interest to a detailed account of it. In 1437 Philip of Burgundy again ventured abroad, and laid siege to Crotoy, at the mouth of the Somme. Talbot marched from Normandy with a small army of four thousand men. Reaching St. Valery over night, the next morning they plunged into the ford of Blanche-taque, so well known since Edward III. crossed it to Crecy, and attacked its besiegers, who hastily drew off to Abbeville. Talbot ravaged the country round, and returned into Normandy laden with spoil.

In May of this year the duke of York was recalled, and was succeeded by Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, who achieved nothing remarkable, and died at Rouen in less than two years. During his government both England and France were exempt from war, but ravaged by famine and pestilence.

In 1439 the count of Richemont, the constable of France, recovered the city of Meaux from Talbot, and Talbot, on his part, accompanied by the earl of Somerset, besieged Harfleur, and took it after a difficult siege. Talbot was, in fact, at this time, the brave supporter of the English power in France. Two years after this time he raised the siege of Pontoise, which was invested by an army of twelve thousand men; but all his valour could not preserve it. In 1442 and 1443 there were some advantages gained by the French in Guienne, and these were counterpoised by greater successes of the English in Maine, Picardy, and Anjou. Both parties were weary of the war, yet neither would recede from its high claims. The pope from time to time urged the combatants, as Christians, to lay aside their animosities, and make peace; and to this desirable object Isabella, duchess of Burgundy, a descendant of John of Gaunt, lent her persuasions, and succeeded, by the co-operation of cardinal Beaufort, in obtaining a cessation of hostilities for an indefinite period. The duke of Orleans, after a captivity of twenty-five years, was now liberated on condition of paying a ransom of two hundred thousand crowns by fixed instalments. Returning to France, he added his endeavours to those of the advocates for peace, and a truce was at length signed on the 28th of May, 1444, for two years, and by subsequent treaties it was prolonged till April, 1450. It was high time that some respite was given to the wretched people of France, who for so many years had borne the brunt of these deadly contests. France, almost from end to end, was become a scene which defies all description, and almost all imagination. The cardinal Beaufort said that more perished in these wars than there were now in the two kingdoms. The late famine and plague had depopulated France still further; and the wasted country was infested by bands of thieves, vagabonds, cut-throats of every description, chiefly deserted soldiers, who committed the most horrible crimes.

Henry of England was now in his twenty-fourth year. His character was that of a mild, kind-hearted, and pious youth, but weak; and, like all weak princes, prone to surround himself with favourites. From all the accounts that have reached us, it is clear that, as a private man, he would have been a good and happy one; as a king he was destined to become the dupe of some stronger mind, and the victim of faction. During the whole of his minority, his two powerful kinsmen, the duke of Gloucester and the cardinal Beaufort, had kept up round the throne a fierce contest for pre-eminence. Gloucester was warm-tempered but generous, and greatly beloved by the people, who called him the "good duke Humphrey." He is said to have been better educated than most princes of his time, to have been fond of men of talent, and to have founded one of the first public libraries in England. The cardinal was a man of a more calculating and politic temperament. He was well known to be cherishing the hope of grasping the pontifical tiara. Each of these nobles was in daily strife for the possession of the king's person, and, through it, for the chief power in the realm. The duke was a great advocate for the vigorous prosecution of the war, and pleased the people by advocating an ascendency over the French. Beaufort was as earnest for peace, and thence his popularity with the church on the Continent.

This feud was brought to a climax in 1439 by the debate on the question of the release of the duke of Orleans. Gloucester opposed it on the ground that his brother, Henry V., had left it as a solemn command that none of the captives of Azincourt should ever be ransomed. Beaufort advocated it on the plea that Orleans would use his influence in France for peace. Beaufort prevailed, and Gloucester, in chagrin, delivered to the king a list of heavy political charges against the cardinal.

Things were at this pass when a charge of sorcery and high treason was got up against the duchess of Gloucester. It will be recollected that the duke had married Eleanor Cobham, the daughter of lord Reginald Cobham, who had been his mistress. Though he had thus made her his wife, her enemies never forgot the circumstances of the duchess's prior situation. It was kept alive as a source of mortification to the duke. Instead of her legitimate title they persisted in calling her Dame Eleanor Cobham. She is represented as a bold, ambitious, dissolute, and avaricious woman. That is the portraiture drawn by her enemies, and they did not stop there. The last attack of the duke on the cardinal, which aimed at once, as it seemed, at his life and honour, roused the crafty churchman to a deadly scheme of revenge. He called in that ecclesiastical machinery which in those ages could so readily be brought to bear on an object of aversion. He is represented as having spies in the household of Gloucester, who kept strict watch on all proceedings, and who reported to him that the duchess had private meetings with one Sir Roger Bolingbroke, a priest, who was a reputed necromancer, and with Marjory Jourdemain, the celebrated witch of Eye. On this fact Beaufort resolved to found a charge which should strike the most cruel blow possible at the domestic peace and honour of Gloucester.

The fact was that Bolingbroke was the duke's chaplain, a man of great science, and especially addicted to astronomy, and its then common accompaniment, astrology, with the casting of nativities, and the like. The duke was extremely fond of the society of learned men, and held frequent discourse with his chaplain on the sciences then popular. Suddenly, and immediately following his accusation of the cardinal, he found his wife, to whom he was greatly attached, accused of high treason, "for that she, by sorcery and enchantment, intended to destroy the king, to the intent to advance and to promote her husband to the crown." Bolingbroke was arrested, and being accused of necromancy, he was exhibited on a platform in St. Paul's churchyard, with the instruments of his art, for he is declared by a writer of the time to have been the most celebrated astronomer and necromancer in the world. He was dressed in a wondrous robe, supposed to be that in which he practised his art, bearing in his right hand a sword, and in his left a sceptre, and seated on a chair on the four corners of which were fixed four swords, and on the points of the swords four images of copper.

On the arrest of Bolingbroke the duchess of Gloucester, aware of the real direction of the intended blow, took refuge in the sanctuary at Westminster. There she was brought face to face with Bolingbroke, who is made to say that it was at her instigation that he first applied to the study of magic; a very improbable circumstance, the more natural one being that his knowledge of astrology had tempted the duchess to make dangerous inquiries. The inquiries appeared to be these: Henry was a weakly youth, and Gloucester was the next heir to the crown, and she had a woman's curiosity to learn whether the stars could tell the relative terms of the king's and Gloucester's lives, and the consequent prospect of the envied and maligned Dame Eleanor Cobham wearing a crown.

Beside the duchess and Bolingbroke, there were arrested as accomplices, Southwell, a canon of St. Paul's, Hum, a priest, and Marjory Jourdemain, the witch. The duchess was examined in St. Stephen's chapel, Westminster, by the archbishop of Canterbury, and charged with having obtained love-philters to secure the affection of her husband. But a much more horrible and absurd charge was that she had procured from Southwell and Bolingbroke a wax figure, which was so moulded by art, that when placed before the fire, as it melted away, the flesh of the king would melt away also, his marrow dry up, and his health fade away. Eight-and-twenty such charges were preferred against Dame Eleanor and her companions, some of which she is said to have admitted, but the majority and the worst to have denied; and on such ridiculous pleas she was condemned on three days of the week to walk bare-headed and bearing a lighted taper in her hand through the streets of London, and afterwards to be confined for life in the Isle of Man, in the custody of Sir John Stanley. The unfortunate men of science were condemned to be hanged, drawn, and quartered at Tyburn. Bolingbroke suffered the sentence, stoutly protesting his innocence; Southwell died in prison; and Hum received a royal pardon. Marjory Jourdemain was burnt as a witch in Smithfield.

As for the duchess, the people, who attributed the whole of this atrocious proceeding to the cardinal and the other enemies of the duke, instead of insulting her in her penance, followed her with deep sympathy and respect, and only the more attached themselves to the duke as the victim of so ruthless a conspiracy. Gloucester himself, prostrated, as it were, by this stunning blow, said little, let it take its course, and brooded over it in secret grief.

At this crisis the marriage of the king was resolved upon. Each party put forth all its energy to secure such a partner as should be likely to incline to its interests, for if the queen should be a woman of ability, she would, with the king's peculiar character, be certain to establish a permanent influence over him; and this circumstance would decide for ever the long contest between them. Gloucester recommended a daughter of the count of Armagnac, on the ground that Armagnac was the enemy of Charles VII., and in alliance with England would add greatly to the strength of the province of Guienne. But no sooner did the proposal reach the ears of Charles than, to prevent so disastrous an occurrence, he invaded the territory of the count, and made him and his family prisoners. The Beaufort party now pressed on their advantage, and strongly represented the benefits to be hoped from the choice of Margaret of Anjou, the daughter of Réné, titular king of Sicily and Jerusalem, and duke of Anjou, Maine, and Bar. Margaret had a great reputation for beauty and talent. She was said to be one of the most superior women of the age, and besides this, she was cousin to the queen of France, greatly admired by Charles himself, and generally resident at his court. It was urged that in these circumstances the chief hope of an adjust-

ment of the conflicting claims of the two kingdoms and of a substantial peace lay.

The people from the first marked their dislike of the alliance. They were not fond of French princesses, and Gloucester, who always represented the popular idea, opposed it with all his eloquence. But the Beaufort party carried it against him. The prime mover of the scheme was William de la Pole, the earl of Suffolk. He was a sworn partisan of Beaufort, with Somerset and Buckingham. He had been residing at the French court, was in high favour there, and there were not wanting rumours of a too familiar intimacy betwixt himself and the proposed queen. Strongly seconded by the Beaufort party in opposition to Gloucester, he was commissioned to negotiate this marriage; and to give him absolute and irresponsible power in the matter, a most singular and unusual guarantee was given by the king, and approved by parliament, against any future penalties for his proceedings in the matter. Armed with this dangerous and suspicious document, Suffolk hastened to France, met the duke of Orleans at Tours, and concluded a truce, during which the question of the marriage might be discussed, and which, if the issue were successful, might terminate in a peace.

The conduct of Suffolk throughout the negotiation was such as made it obvious that he had not secured a previous indemnity for nothing. The father of Margaret, though titular king of Sicily and Jerusalem, was in reality a pauper. He did not possess a single foot of land in the countries over which his royal title extended. Maine and Anjou, his hereditary dukedoms, were in the hands of the English. Under these circumstances the most that could be expected was that England should be willing to receive the princess without a dower. But Suffolk not only waived any claim of dower, but resigned as a condition of the marriage the duchies of Maine and Anjou to Margaret's father. This was a direct act of high treason. These duchies were the very keys of Normandy, and their cession highly endangered all the English possessions in France. Nothing but the most consummate folly, or, what was more probable, the blinding influence which the daughter of king Réné already exerted over Suffolk, could have induced him to perpetrate such a deed. This condition appears to have been kept in the background as long as possible. Whether Beaufort had been a party to this disgraceful measure, or whether he was duped himself by Suffolk, does not appear. He was now an old man of eighty, and since his signal vengeance on Gloucester, by the disgrace and punishment of his wife, had retired to his diocese, as if apprehensive that there might come a repayment of the injury from Gloucester or his staunch admirers, the people.

Suffolk for his success in this negotiation was created a marquis; he married Margaret as proxy for Henry at Nanci on the 28th of October, 1444. Jousts and tournaments were celebrated by the French court in its joy over this event, from which it expected no ordinary advantages. Suffolk does not appear to have been in any haste to return to England with the fair bride; for, though contracted in October, they remained in France all the winter, and only landed at Porchester on the 8th of April, 1445. Great ceremony had been made by the French court on Margaret's departure. The king himself, with a splendid retinue, accompanied her some miles on her way from the city, and separated from her in tears. Her father continued with her to Bar le Duc.

On the 22nd of April she was married in Tichfield Abbey to Henry; and on the 30th of May she was crowned with much splendour at Westminster, and very soon showed that she was prepared to exercise to the full her royal authority. The king, charmed with her beauty and address, resigned himself a willing creature into her hands. She formed an immediate and close intimacy with the Beaufort party; her constant counsellors were Somerset, Buckingham, and Suffolk. Suffolk appeared to the people much more the husband of Margaret than Henry. One of the first acts of the queen's party was to procure a repeal of the act of Henry V., that no peace should be made with France without the consent of the three estates of parliament. They obtained ample supplies, and from both houses the most profuse thanks to Suffolk for his services in accomplishing this happy union.

The people meantime looked on with grumbling distrust. They told Gloucester that they knew he would have obtained them a better queen. But Gloucester saw that a power hostile to him was now in the ascendant. He had struggled against this match so long as it was of use. He had even represented to Henry during its progress that the count of Armagnac was once more at liberty, and that nothing now prevented his marriage with his daughter, to whom he was, in fact, affianced. All these things had been duly communicated to Margaret by Gloucester's enemies, who surrounded her; and he was marked for the summary vengeance of that woman, whose soul concealed a fount of haughty passion, pride, and vindictiveness which was ere long to justify the expressive epithet, "the wolf of France," which Shakespeare bestowed upon her.

Probably Gloucester was become well aware of this, for he now carefully avoided any public opposition. He went so far as to join in parliament in expressing approval of Suffolk's management of the marriage treaty; and he was one of the first to pay his respects to the queen on landing by meeting her at Blackheath with five hundred men in livery, and conducting her to his palace at Greenwich, where a banquet awaited her. But the rival party, in conjunction with their new ally, the queen, who could never forgive Gloucester his endeavours to prevent her mounting the throne of England, did not abate their enmity any more on account of Gloucester's quiescence. The cardinal came forth again, and took the lead in the councils. He paid the most marked and flattering court to the queen. He was enormously wealthy, and the king was as notoriously poor. Beaufort supplied the needy court with money; and through the medium of the queen now held the most undisputed power over the king.

All things now concurred to favour a blow which should at once gratify the malice of the queen, the cardinal, and the whole party. By some means they contrived to infuse into the mind of Henry a suspicion of the loyalty of his uncle Gloucester. Probably they might extend to him the charges which they had made to tell so fatally already against his duchess, of a design to make away with the king and usurp the throne. Perhaps the repeated instances in which Gloucester had brought forward the duke of York, in opposition to the cardinal's party, might be made the instrument of their vengeance. The duke of York was the claimant of the throne in right of the earl of Marche, a

right superior to the usurped claim of the present line, and which he afterwards asserted. Whatever the cause, or the combination of causes, the destruction of Gloucester was determined. Henry summoned a parliament to meet, not, as usual, at Westminster, but at Bury St. Edmunds, in Suffolk, where the conspirators would be in the midst of the favourite's retainers. The measures which were adopted were ominous of some serious design. The knights of the shire were ordered to come in arms. The king was conveyed to the town under strong escort, and the men of Suffolk were placed in numerous bodies round the royal lodgings. All the avenues to the town were guarded during the night by pickets of soldiers.

Queen Margaret. From a Tapestry in St. Mary's Hall. Coventry.

The duke of Gloucester, clearly suspecting no harm, went from his castle of Devizes to the opening of the parliament, where everything was conducted with the usual form, and nothing took place at all calculated to excite suspicion. But the next day, the 11th of February, 1447, the lord Beaumont, constable of England, attended by the duke of Buckingham and several of the peers of Suffolk's party, arrested Gloucester, seizing, at the same time, all his attendants, and consigning them to different prisons. The Suffolk party now openly avowed that Gloucester had formed a scheme to kill the king, to usurp the throne, liberate his duchess, and make her queen. The story was too palpably improbable to receive the slightest credence; it was, therefore, dropped, and Gloucester remained seventeen days in prison, awaiting his trial.

When summoned, at length, to attend the council, he was found dead in his bed, to the great horror of the king, who was obviously unprepared for such a catastrophe. The body was exposed to the view of the parliament and the people, to convince them that there had been no violence used. There were no marks of violence, indeed, upon it but this had no weight with the people, who recollected that such had been the case in the mysteriously sudden death

of Edward II., Richard II., and of the former unfortunate duke of Gloucester, who had, under precisely similar circumstances, perished in the prison of Calais in Richard II.'s time. This case was the fac-simile of that; when the prisoner, before in perfect health, was called for by the king, he was found to be dead. Nothing, therefore, could convince the incensed people that their favourite had died naturally, and their undisguised suspicion fell on the cardinal, the queen, and Suffolk. One historian only of the time, Whethamstede, abbot of St. Albans, has avowed his belief that the duke died from natural causes, and great weight has been given to his opinion, because he was attached to the duke, and loud in his abuse of his enemies. It is, however, but one opinion against a host, and all the circumstances tend to support the popular belief that Gloucester was murdered, though with great cunning and skill.

Nothing contributed more to confirm this belief in the public than the unseemly haste with which Suffolk and the queen rushed to seize on the estates and substance of Gloucester, who died without an heir. His duchess was declared incapable of claiming as the duke's widow on account of "her former misgovernment of herself;" and the ample territories of the duke were distributed amongst the creatures of Suffolk. The friends and partisans of Gloucester loudly denounced this shameless proceeding, and never ceased their efforts from year to year till they obtained from parliament a full declaration of his innocence. Meantime a number of the attendants of Gloucester were brought to trial by Suffolk, who now was all in all at court, on the charge of plotting the release of the duchess of Gloucester and the murder of the king, in order to set upon the throne the duke their master. They were condemned to be hanged, but after being tied up, they were immediately cut down again; and before the executioner could quarter them as customary in cases of treason, Suffolk produced the king's pardon, and the miserable half-dead men were allowed to recover. Such barbarity, so far from being regarded as mercy by the people, only added to the horror of these transactions.

The cardinal Beaufort only survived his great rival six weeks. Every reader recalls the celebrated death-scene of this ambitious prelate as described by Shakespeare—king Henry at his bed-side exclaiming:—

> "Lord cardinal, if thou think'st on heaven's bliss
> Hold up thy hand; make signal of thy hope.—
> He dies and makes no sign! O God, forgive him!"

The situation and invocation are undoubtedly those of the poet; but they are founded on the wide-spread belief at the time that Beaufort had the blood of Gloucester on his soul. Whether he deserved it or not, he had the odium of it; and though Catholic writers have laudably endeavoured to vindicate his memory; yet Hall, the chronicler, assures us that his chaplain, John Baker, reported that on his death-bed he lamented that money could not purchase life, and that death should overtake him, now that, Gloucester being dead, he might still hope for the papal tiara. So far as concerned the disposition of his wealth, it was noble, being principally devoted to public and charitable purposes. He left four thousand pounds—equal to forty thousand pounds now—for the relief of poor prisoners in London. He gave two thousand pounds to two colleges founded by the king at Eton and Cambridge; and the rest founded the hospital of St. Cross, at Winchester, now of immense value. He was buried in the cathedral of Winchester, in the beautiful chantry which still elicits so much admiration from the beholder.

The article in the marriage treaty of the queen which stipulated for the cession of Anjou and Maine, had been kept as secret as possible during the life of the cardinal; but circumstances now rendered it impossible to keep it longer in the background. The court of France insisted on their surrender. When these demands could be no longer resisted—for Charles prepared to invade the provinces—an order under the hand of the king was sent to Sir Francis Surienne, the governor of Mans, commanding him to surrender the place to Charles of Anjou. Surienne refused to retire, and the count Dunois invested the city. Surienne was then compelled to surrender, and the bishop of Chichester was despatched from England to give up the whole province, with the exception of Fresnoi. It was stated, however, that the king of England did not cede his right to the sovereignty of these states, but merely their enjoyment by the father and uncle of his wife for their natural lives; and it was promised that the grantees of the English crown should receive from France a sum of money equal to ten years' value of the lands they lost.

The consequences were very speedily seen. Maine was filled with French troops, and the duke of Somerset, the regent, announced to the council that the three estates of Normandy, encouraged by this change, had refused all supplies, and that unless immediate and effectual assistance were afforded from England, these provinces would all be lost. To make matters worse, Surienne, who had reluctantly surrendered Mans, and was refused by Somerset admittance into Normandy, as a dangerous and insubordinate officer, marched into Brittany, seized the town of Fougères, repaired the fortifications of Pontorson and St. James de Beuvron, and levied subsistence on the whole province at will. The duke of Brittany complained to Charles; Charles demanded prompt damages to the amount of one million six hundred thousand crowns; and instead of truce, which had been concluded for two years, the whole war was opened again.

These transactions occasioned a violent outbreak at home. The earl of Suffolk was vehemently denounced by the people as a traitor, for the wanton surrender of Maine and Anjou to the French. Suffolk was compelled to demand to be brought face to face with his accusers before the king and council. The demand was granted. Both parties were heard, and, as might have been expected, Suffolk, the favourite of both king and queen, was not only acquitted of all blame, but pronounced to have done effectual service to the state, and all cavillers were silenced by the threat of forfeiture of all offices and privileges which they held under the crown.

The English exchequer was empty, and Charles of France, aware not only of that but of the miserable feebleness of the government, put forth all his energies to profit by the opportunity. A striking change seemed to have come over him with the advance of years. As if the wondrous maid of Orleans had left some of her spirit with him, he now exerted himself, with great industry and sagacity, to repair the evils which so long had afflicted his country. He attacked the corruption of the courts and magistracy; he rigorously reformed the discipline of the army; he set himself to restore order and vigour into the

finances; he repressed with a bold hand the factions which had so long raged at court, and he took every means of reviving the arts and protecting and encouraging agriculture. It was with astonishment that those who had seen France a few years before now beheld the prosperity which was springing up, and the strength which was becoming visible.

The duke of Somerset found himself destitute of money, for the government at home was poor, and the people discontented; and Charles, putting himself at the head of his troops, fell upon Normandy, while the duke of Brittany, the duke of Alençon, and the count Dunois, marched upon it simultaneously from different points. Wherever the French commanders appeared, the people threw open their gates, showing on which side their hearts lay. Verneuil, Nogent, Chateau Gaillard, Ponteau de Mer, Gisors, Mantes, Vernon, Argentin, Lisieux, Fecamp, Coutances, Belesme, Pont de l'Arche fell with astonishing rapidity into their hands. The duke of Somerset, so far from possessing an army capable of taking the field, had not even enough to man the garrisons, or provisions to support them; to such a condition had feuds and mismanagement at home reduced the English affairs on the Continent.

The duke threw himself into Rouen, his sole trust there being in timely relief from England. He quickly found himself surrounded by an army fifty thousand strong, led by the king himself. The spirit of revolt was not less active there than in other towns. A number of the citizens, pretending to be desirous to aid in the defence, were permitted to mount guard on the walls, which they at once betrayed into the hands of the French. The valour of lord Talbot rescued them from that danger, but it was only to delay for awhile the surrender. Somerset capitulated on the 4th of November, 1449, consenting to pay fifty-six thousand francs, and to give up Arques, Tancarville, Caudebec, Honfleur, and other places in High Normandy, and deliver Talbot as one of the hostages, thus depriving the English of the only general capable of rescuing them from their present dilemma. Harfleur made a stouter defence under Sir Thomas Curson, the governor, but was eventually compelled to yield to Dunois.

The indignation of the people in England at these alarming reverses compelled Suffolk to send some forces to Normandy, but in no proportion to the need. Sir Thomas Kyriel landed at Cherbourg with about three thousand men, and, collecting about as many more, advanced towards Caen, to which the regent Somerset had retreated. But he was met on the way, near Fourmigni, by the earl of Clermont. He gave battle with the ancient confidence in the superior valour of his countrymen, but after a severe contest of three hours, he was attacked by a second army, under Richemont, the constable, which took him in the flank and rear. The numbers were now utterly overwhelming, independent of the freshness of the new troops, and the surprise. Some of his ranks broke and fled, and others remained fighting hardily till they were cut down or made prisoners. The exultation of the French over this victory was excessive. It was the first which they had won for two generations in the open field, and they spread the tidings all over France with an alacrity which told like lightning. The moral effect was immense. It was clear that the prediction of the inspired maid was drawing near its fulfilment; the English were about to be driven out of France. The terror which had surrounded them—a shadow of death and dismay—was gone. Avranches, Bayeux, and Valogne immediately opened their gates; the regent was besieged in Caen, and compelled to surrender. Cherbourg alone remained; that was soon after taken, and within twelve months the whole of the beautiful country of Normandy, which had been won by the valour of Henry V., with its seven bishoprics and hundred fortified towns, was lost to England for ever.

Charles VII., encouraged by his success, inspired with ever augmenting confidence by the marvellous turn which affairs had taken, no longer appeared the same prince who, before the days of the maid of Orleans, wasted his years in indolence and vice, surrounded himself by the worst and most ferocious of men, drove from him the able, and disgusted the wise; he was now prompt, active, far-seeing, and indefatigable in knitting up the national forces, physical and moral, into an irresistible potency. No sooner was Normandy his own than he turned vigorously upon Guienne, a province far more English in its people and its feelings; a region which had belonged to England from the days of its heiress, Eleanor of Aquitaine, and Henry II. But the present miserable condition of England, where a factious nobility were quarrelling, seeking each others' destruction, instead of the good of the nation, and where a feeble king was guided by a self-willed and un-English queen, gave the people of Guienne no hope of effectual aid in their struggle. The mass of the inhabitants was discouraged, and the nobles, fearing to forfeit their estates by opposition to the French invaders, were prepared to submit on the first arrival of the enemy. Charles sent on before him the brave and experienced count Dunois and the count Penthièvre; and immediately after the submission of Normandy he followed with a large army. There was no opposition from the castles, the nobles came over to him at once; and the towns only held out till they had stipulated for their charters and privileges. Charles promised everything, and the gates flew open. The English, no longer the proud and insolent race of the days of the Black Prince, retired before the advancing French, and took refuge in Bordeaux. The enemy was not long in following. Castillon, St. Emilion, Libourne, Rions, were successively carried by assault, and behold the armies of France swarming round the walls of Bordeaux, that large and flourishing city, which had witnessed such festive and military magnificence in the proud days of the Edwards, and over whose towers the flag of England had waved for three hundred years! Here the last remains of the ancient lion spirit blazed up. The English commander assembled the troops which had collected thither from the various quarters of the evacuated country, and followed by the mayor and ten thousand citizens, who dreaded the fiscal impositions of the rapacious French court, made a determined sally on the enemy. But they were gallantly received. The sieur d'Orval with his cavalry charged furiously upon the undisciplined citizens, who gave way, and carried confusion through the whole body of the soldiery. There was a terrible slaughter, the French made a great number of prisoners, and the English were glad to make good their retreat into the city. There, however, they held out till the advancing winter compelled the enemy to draw off.

At any other period the winter would have been seized

upon by the English government to send out a sufficient army to recover the lost honour of the nation. Bordeaux would, in the days of the Edwards or the last Henry, have been glutted with troops and stores. There would have been a spirit burning through the whole British army, with the ardour of a furnace, to wipe off past disgrace, and snatch fresh honours; but that time and spirit were gone. Imbecility sat enthroned in London; and the reign of England beyond the Channel was over for ever.

The campaign of 1452 was opened with some show of spirit. The people of Guienne, already groaning under the load of taxation which Charles, consulting his necessity rather than his word, had laid upon them, had despatched a deputation to London, entreating that an army might be sent to their relief, and offering to renew their allegiance. The brave Talbot, earl of Shrewsbury, who had so long fought in France, was sent over with four thousand men, and his son, lord Lisle, followed with as many more. Talbot was now eighty years of age, but full of a spirit and activity which seemed to know no decay. He very soon recovered Bordelais and Chatillon. In the spring of 1453 he opened the campaign by the capture of Fronsac, where the French army, under Lobeac and Jalenges, advanced against him, and count Penthièvre invested Chatillon. Hastening to relieve that town, Talbot fell upon the French lines very early in the morning, and created such confusion that he ordered a general assault on the camp, the intrenchments of which were lined with three hundred pieces of cannon. While dashing forward on this formidable battery, his troops were attacked in the rear by another body of French which came up. Talbot had his horse killed under him. His leg was broken in the fall, and he was despatched with a spear as he lay on the ground. His son fell in the vain endeavour to rescue his father; and the army, on learning the death of its commander, dispersed in every direction. A thousand men, who had already penetrated into the camp, were made prisoners.

Charles, who now arrived, took the command of his victorious army, and led it to the gates of Bordeaux. That city, with Fronsac and Bayonne, still held out; but famine at length compelled them to surrender. Bayonne was the last to yield, but the count Gaston de Foix besieging it with a large army of Basques and Bearnese, it was compelled to open its gates. And thus, in the autumn of 1453, closed all the English dreams of empire in France, and the possession of the last fragments of the territories which came to us with the Norman Conquest, except Calais and a strip of marshy land around it. In that dream of a century what oceans of blood had been spilled, what crimes and horrors perpetrated. And that was the finale. The predictions of Joan of Arc and of Henry V. had received their full and distinct accomplishment, that in a very few years the English would be driven out of France, and that Henry of Windsor should lose all that his father had acquired. This loss, however, great as it was, was only the beginning of losses to Henry; he had yet to lose everything.

It is not to be supposed that this disgraceful termination of our French dominion, this melancholy antithesis to the glories of Crecy and Azincourt, were borne with indifference by the people of England. With Bedford and Talbot the military genius of the nation seemed to have disappeared. Somerset, who was ambitious of ruling at home, had shown in his character of regent of France only a faculty for sitting still in fortified towns, so long as the enemy was not very urgent to drive him out. At the head of the government now stood Suffolk and the queen; and, while their administration afforded no support to our commanders abroad, their folly and despotism at home incensed the whole nation. As loss after loss was proclaimed, the public exasperation had increased. The cession of Maine and Anjou had excited the deepest indignation; but when month after month had brought only news of the invasion of Normandy and the loss of town after town, the whole population appeared stung to madness. Every one was indignantly deploring the fallen glory of England, and demanding vengeance on the minister who had so traitorously relinquished the first firm hold on our French possessions. Suffolk was denounced as the queen's minion, as a man who was so besotted by the charms of a foreign woman as to sacrifice for his pleasure, and to her relations, our fairest inheritance. On his head they piled, not only his fair share of those transactions, but the full odium of the release of the duke of Orleans, contrary to the solemn injunction of the sagacious Henry V.; the murder of the popular duke of Gloucester; the deplorable emptiness of the state coffers, and all the consequent defeats and disasters.

To calm the public mind and to take measures for the defence of Normandy a parliament was summoned, but scarcely did it meet when the news of the fall of Rouen arrived, adding fresh fury to the popular wrath, and confusion to the counsels of the government. Stormy debates and altercations continued in parliament for six weeks, whilst succour should have been despatched to our army in Normandy. When at length Sir Thomas Kyriel was sent with a small force to relieve Somerset, it was, as we have seen, only to be defeated and dispersed on its very first landing. In the midst of the ever-growing irritation of the people, and the bitterness of the opposition from these causes, the duke of Suffolk was accused of an attempt to cut off his most formidable enemies by actual assassination. A notorious outlaw, William Tailbois, was discovered lurking near the door of the council chamber, accompanied by several armed ruffians. Lord Cromwell, the leader of the opposition in parliament and in the council, accused Tailbois of an intention to murder him, and the man was committed to the Tower, and condemned to pay a fine of three thousand pounds to lord Cromwell. Suffolk most unwisely defended Tailbois to the utmost of his power, and thus, in public opinion, identified himself with him in the attempt.

Soon after the bishop of Chichester, keeper of the privy seal, who had been employed to complete the surrender of Maine to the French, was sent to Portsmouth to pay the soldiers and sailors about to embark for Guienne their then stipulated amount. No sooner did the people hear his name than, crying, "That is the traitor who delivered Maine to the French!" they rose *en masse*, and seized him. In appealing to them to spare his life, he was reported to have bade the populace reflect that it was not he, but Suffolk, who had sold that province to France; that he himself was but the humble instrument employed to personally deliver what he had no power to keep; that it was Suffolk who was the traitor, and that he had boasted that he was as powerful in the French as in the English government.

This explanation did not save the prelate's life, but it raised the fury of the people to the culminating point against Suffolk. They now, in their undiscriminating

resentment, not only accused him of what was justly attributable to him, but of all sorts of impossible crimes. He was not only represented as insolent and rapacious, being the open paramour of the queen, and thus keeping the king as a mere puppet in his hands; as having not only murdered Gloucester and seized his possessions; but as having obtained exorbitant grants from the crown, embezzled the public money, perverted justice, screened notorious offenders, supported iniquitous causes, and filled the offices of state with his vilest creatures. The powerful party which prosecuted the revenge of Gloucester's injuries, and now allied itself to the ambitious duke of York, were the more numerously backed by the nobility, who regarded Suffolk with envy as a man who, being but the grandson of a merchant, had risen over their heads, and made himself all but monarch.

This universal clamour against him compelled him to rise in his place immediately on the opening of parliament, and endeavour to defend himself. He alluded to the report, industriously circulated, that he intended to marry his son to a daughter of Somerset, and through that alliance to aspire to the crown. He treated the rumour as most ridiculous, as no doubt it was, reminding the house of the deaths of his father and three brothers in the service of the country, at Azincourt, Jargeau, &c., and of his own long and severe service there. But his appeal had no other result than to induce the commons to demand that, as on his own showing he lay under suspicions of treason, he should be impeached and committed to the Tower, in order to his trial. They asserted that he had invited the king of France to come over and make himself master of this country, and had furnished the castle of Wallingford with stores and provisions for the purpose of aiding him.

Probably Suffolk had made some such preparation in anticipation of some popular outbreak—an event which ere long took place; but the idea of his deliberate betrayal of his country to France was too absurd for anything but a party cry. It did its work, however; on that ludicrous charge he was committed to the Tower; and the archbishop of Canterbury, who had shown himself a servile partisan of Suffolk, and presided at the scandalous trial of Gloucester's wife, surrendered the seals of the chancellorship in trepidation.

In the course of the trial the commons appear to have grown sensible of the futility of the bulk of these charges against the favourite, and a month after its commencement concentrated the force of their complaints on the waste and embezzlement of the public revenue, and the odious means to which he had resorted for its replenishment. This was an accusation which would be echoed by every class and person almost in the nation. It was a very sore subject indeed. During the minority of the king, the rapacity of the courtiers had been, as usual in such cases, unbounded. The king's uncles had been utterly helpless to restrain it. It had crippled the resources for the war, and consequently led to its opprobrious termination. The royal demesnes were dissipated, and there was a debt against the king of £372,000, equal to nearly £4,000,000 of present money. This the parliament protested that it neither could nor would pay. The consequence of this bankruptcy of the crown was, that all the old horrors and outrages of purveyance, in direct breach of magna charta, had been renewed. The country groaned under a system of universal robbery, which the public endured with an impatience and an outcry which menaced revolution; and all these offences were now, as is wont in such impeachments, heaped on the devoted head of Suffolk.

When Suffolk was called on for his defence he fell on his knees before the king and solemnly asserted his innocence. He declared that, as to the surrender of Maine and Anjou, that was not simply his act, but that of the whole council. He spread the majority of the charges in this manner over the whole ministry; the rest he denied, and appealed to the peers around him for their knowledge of the fact that, so far from marrying his son to a daughter of Somerset, he was affianced to a daughter of Warwick.

Whatever was the amount of Suffolk's guilt, the people were resolved to listen to one penalty alone, that of his death; and to prevent him falling under the judgment of parliament, the king, or rather the queen, acting in his name, adopted a bold and startling expedient. He announced to him, through the lord chancellor, that, as he had not claimed to be tried by his peers, the king would exercise his prerogative, and holding him neither guilty nor innocent of the treasons with which he had been charged, would and did banish him from the kingdom for five years, on the second impeachment, for waste of the revenues. The house of lords, astonished at this invasion of their right to try those of their own body, immediately protested that this act of the king should form no precedent in bar of their privileges hereafter. With this the peers contented themselves in their corporate capacity, as some historians have suggested, from a secret compromise between the two parties.

But the ferment out of doors was terrible. The people looked upon the whole as a trick of the court to screen the favourite and defraud them of the satisfaction of witnessing his just punishment. There was a buzz of indignation from one end of the kingdom to the other. The most inflammatory placards were stuck on the doors of the churches, and the death of the duke was openly sworn. Two thousand people were assembled in St. Giles's to seize him on his discharge; but the intended victim escaped, for that time, the vengeance of the mob falling on his retainers. He got down to his estates in Suffolk, and after assembling the knights and squires of his neighbourhood, and before them swearing on the sacrament that he was innocent of the crimes laid to his charge, and writing a letter to his son which Lingard, the historian, says it is difficult to read without being convinced of his truthfulness, he embarked at Ipswich in a small vessel for Calais. But his enemies had resolved that he should not thus escape them. The Nicholas of the Tower, one of the largest ships of the navy, bore down upon him on his passage, and ordered him to come on board. He was received by the captain as he stepped on deck with the ominous salutation: "Welcome, traitor!" Two nights he was kept on board this vessel, while his capture was announced on shore, and further instructions awaited. It was clear, from a ship of the navy being used, that persons of no common influence were arrayed against him; and after a mock trial by the sailors, he was conducted to near Dover, where a small boat came alongside with a block, a rusty sword, and an executioner. The duke was lowered into the boat, and there beheaded, in a bungling and barbarous manner. His remains were laid on the sands near Dover, and there guarded by the

sheriff of Kent, till the king commanded them to be delivered to his widow, who was no other than the granddaughter of Chaucer, the poet. She deposited the body in the collegiate church of Wingfield, in Suffolk.

CHAPTER LXXIII.

Jack Cade's Insurrection—The French recover Guienne—Duke of York takes up Arms—Swears Fealty to the King—The French Provinces lost—Birth of Prince Edward—Commencement of the Wars of the Roses—Battle of St. Albans—Battle of Blore-Heath—Yorkists dispersed at Ludiford—Battle of Northampton—The King taken—Queen invades England—Battle of Wakefield—Cruelties of the Queen's Followers—Battle of Mortimer's Cross—Second Battle of St. Albans—The King recovered—Retreat of the Queen—Accession of Edward IV.

THIS extraordinary death of Suffolk excited the utmost consternation at court. The king and queen were plunged into the deepest grief. They saw that a powerful party was engaged in thus defeating their attempt to rescue Suffolk from his enemies by a slight term of exile; and they strongly suspected that the duke of York, though personally absent in his government of Ireland, was at the bottom of it. It was more than suspected that he entertained serious designs of profiting by the feebleness and unpopularity of the government to assert his claims to the crown. This ought to have made the king and queen especially circumspect, but, on the contrary, the king announced his resolve to punish the people of Kent for the murder of Suffolk, which had been perpetrated on their coast. The queen was furious in her vows of vengeance. These unwise demonstrations incurred the anger of the people, and especially irritated the inhabitants of Kent. To add to the popular discontent, Somerset, who had lost by his imbecility the French territories, was made minister in the place of Suffolk, and invested with all the favour of the court. The people in several counties threatened to rise and reform the government; and the opportunity was seized by a bold adventurer of the name of John Cade, an Irishman, to attempt a revolution. He selected Kent as the quarter more pre-eminently in a state of excitement against the court, and proclaiming himself to be John Mortimer, of the royal line of Mortimer, and cousin to the duke of York, he gave himself out to be the son of Sir John Mortimer, who, on a charge of high treason, had been executed in the beginning of this reign, without any trial or evidence. The lenity which Henry V. had always shown to the Mortimers, dangerous as was their position near the throne, having unquestionably a superior title to his own, had not been imitated by Bedford and Gloucester, the infant king's uncles, and their neglect of the forms of a regular trial had only strengthened the opinions of the people as to the Mortimer rights. No sooner, therefore, did this adventurer assume this popular name, than the people, burning with the anger of the hour against the present unlucky dynasty, flocked, to the amount of twenty thousand, to his standard, and advanced to Blackheath. Emissaries were sent into London to stir up the people there, and induce them to open their gates and join the movement. As the government, taken by surprise, was destitute of the necessary troops on the spot to repel so formidable a body of insurgents, it put on the same air of moderation which Richard II. had done in Tyler's rebellion, and many messages passed between the king and the pretended Mortimer; or, as he also called himself, John Amend-all.

The Tower of London.

In reply to the king's inquiry as to the cause of this assembly, Cade sent in "The Complaints of the Commons of Kent, and the Causes of the Assembly on Blackheath." These documents were most ably and artfully drawn. They professed the most affectionate attachment to the king, and demanded the redress of what were universally known to be real and enormous grievances. They were those under which the whole kingdom was and had been long

DEATH OF THE EARL OF SHREWSBURY. (See page 592.)

smarting, the loss of the territories in France, and the loss of the national honour with them, through the treason and maladministration of the ministers; the usurpation of the crown lands by the greedy courtiers, and the consequent shifting of the royal expenditure to the shoulders of the people, with the scandals, offences, and robberies of purveyance. They asserted that the people of Kent had been especially extortioned and ill-used by the sheriffs and tax-gatherers, and that the free elections of their knights of the shire had been prevented. They declared, moreover, that corrupt men were employed at court, and the princes of the blood and honest men kept out of power.

Government undertook to examine into these causes of complaint, and promised an answer, but the people soon were aware that this was only a pretence to gain time, and that the answer would be presented at the point of the bayonet. Jack Cade, therefore, sent out what he called "The Requests of the Captain of the Great Assembly in Kent." These requests were based directly on the previous complaints, and were that the king should renew the grants of the crown, and so enable himself to live on his own income, without fleecing the people; that he should dismiss all the corrupt councillors, all the false progeny of the duke of Suffolk, and take into his service his right trusty cousins and noble peers, the duke of York, now banished to Ireland, the dukes of Exeter, Buckingham, and Norfolk. This looked assuredly as if those who drew up these able papers for Cade were in the direct interest of the York party, and the more so as it went on to denounce the false traitors who had compassed the death of that excellent prince the duke of Gloucester, of their holy father the cardinal, and who had so shamefully caused the loss of Maine, Anjou, Normandy, and all our lands in France. The assumed murder of the cardinal, who had died almost in public and surrounded by the ceremonies of the church, was too ridiculous, and was probably thrown in to hide the cloven foot of the actual party at work. The requests then demanded summary execution on the detested collectors and extortioners, Cromer, Lisle, Este, and Sleg.

The court had now a force ready equal to that of the insurgents, and sent it under Sir Humphrey Stafford to answer the requests by cannon and matchlock. Cade retreated to Sevenoaks, where, taking advantage of Stafford's too hasty pursuit, with only part of his forces, he fell upon his troops, put them to flight, killed Stafford himself, and, arraying himself in his armour, advanced again to his former position upon Blackheath.

This unexpected success threw the court into a panic. The soldiers who had gone to Sevenoaks had gone unwillingly; and those left on Blackheath now declared that they knew not why they should fight their fellow-countrymen for only asking redress of undoubted grievances. The nobles, who were at heart adverse to the present ministers, found this quite reasonable, and the court was obliged to assume an air of concession. The lord Say, who had been one of Suffolk's most obsequious instruments, and was regarded by the people as a prime agent in the making over Maine and Anjou, was sent to the Tower as a propitiation, with some inferior officers. The king was advised to disband his army, and retire to Kenilworth; and lord Scales, with a thousand men, undertook to defend the Tower. Cade advanced from Blackheath, took possession of Southwark, and demanded entrance into the city of London.

The lord mayor summoned a council in which the proposal was debated; and it was concluded to offer no resistance. On the 3rd of July Cade marched over the bridge, and took up his quarters in the heart of the capital. He took the precaution to cut the ropes of the drawbridge with his sword as he passed, to prevent his being caught, as in a trap; and, maintaining strict discipline amongst his followers, he led them back into the Borough in the evening. The next day he reappeared in the same circumspect and orderly manner; and, compelling the lord mayor and the judges to sit in Guildhall, he brought lord Say before them, and arraigned him on a charge of high reason. Say demanded to be tried by his peers; but he was hurried away to the standard in Cheapside, and beheaded. His son-in-law, Cromer, sheriff of Kent, was served the same; the duchess of Suffolk, the bishop of Salisbury, Thomas Daniel, and others, were accused of the like high crimes; but, luckily, were not to be found. The bishop had already fallen by his own tenants at Eddington, in Leicestershire.

On the third day Cade's followers plundered some of the houses of the citizens; and the Londoners, calling in lord Scales with his one thousand men to aid them, resolved that Cade should be prevented again entering the city. Cade received notice of this from some of his partisans, and rushed to the bridge in the night to secure it. He found it already in the possession of the citizens. There was a bloody battle, which lasted for six hours; when the insurgents drew off, and left the Londoners masters of the bridge.

On receiving this news, the archbishops of Canterbury and York, who were in the Tower, determined to try the ruse which had succeeded with the followers of Wat Tyler. They therefore sent the bishop of Winchester to promise redress of grievances, and a full pardon under the great seal, for every one who should at once return to their homes. After some demur, the terms were gratefully accepted; Cade himself embraced the offered grace, according to the subsequent proclamation against him, dated the 10th of July, but quickly repenting of his credulity, once more unfurled his banner, and found a number of the men ready to rejoin it. This mere remnant of the insurgent host, however, was utterly incapable of effecting anything against the city; they retired to Deptford, and thence to Rochester, hoping to gather a fresh army. But the people had now cooled; the rioters began to divide their plunder and to quarrel over it; and Cade, seeing all was lost, and fearing that he should be seized for the reward of one thousand marks offered for his head, fled on horseback towards Lewes. Disguising himself, he lurked about in secret places, till, being discovered in a garden at Heyfield, in Kent, by Alexander Iden, a country gentleman, he was, after a short battle, killed by Iden, and his body carried to London.

That the party of the duke of York had some concern in this movement, the government not only suspected, but some of the followers of Cade, when brought to execution, are said to have confessed. But much stronger evidence of the fact is, that there was an immediate rumour that the duke himself was preparing to pass over to England. The court immediately issued orders, in the king's name, to forbid his coming, and to oppose any armed attempt on his part. The duke defeated this scheme by coming

without any retinue whatever, trusting to the goodwill of the people. His confidence in thus coming at once to the very court, put the government, which had shown such suspicion of him, completely in the wrong in the eye of the public, and advantage was taken of this by his partisans in all quarters to extol his open, honourable conduct, and to represent not only his superior right, but the benefit to the nation of removing an imbecile usurper, and a false, French-hearted queen who had brought such disgrace and trouble on the country, and placing on the throne an able and popular prince.

We are now on the eve of that great contest for the possession of the crown which figures so eminently in our history as the Wars of the Roses; and it is important at the outset to make clear to ourselves what are the real grounds of the quarrel, and where lies the justice of the case. The usurpation of Henry IV., productive of very bloody consequences at the time, had nearly been forgotten through the brilliant successes of his son, Henry V.; but still the heirs of the true line, according to the doctrine of lineal descent, were in existence. The Mortimers, earls of Marche, had been spared by the usurping family; and Richard, duke of York, was now the representative of that line. To understand clearly how the Mortimers, and from them Richard, duke of York, took precedence of Henry VI., according to lineal descent, we must recollect that Henry IV. was the son of John of Gaunt, who was the fourth son of Edward III. When he deposed Richard II., who was the son of the Black Prince, the eldest son of Edward III., there was living the earl of Marche, the grandson of Lionel, the *third* son of Edward III., who had clearly the right to precede Henry. This right had been, moreover, recognised by parliament. But Henry of Lancaster, disregarding this claim, seized on the crown by force, yet took no care to destroy the true claimant. In course of time, the duke of York, who was paternally descended from Edward Langley, the youngest son of Edward III., was also maternally the lineal descendant of Lionel, the third son through the daughter and heiress of Mortimer, the earl of Marche. By this descent he preceded the descendants of Henry IV., and was by right of heirship the undoubted claimant of the crown.

The Marches had shown no disposition whatever to exert that right, and that had proved their safety. They had been for several centuries a particularly modest and unambitious race; and so long as the descendants of Henry IV. had proved able or popular monarchs, their claims would have lain in abeyance. But they were never forgotten; and now that the imbecility and long minority of Henry VI. had created strong factions, and disgusted the people, this claim was zealously revived. Henry IV. had, as we showed under his reign, one real and indefeasible claim to the throne, that of the election of the people, had he chosen to accept it; but this he proudly rejected, and took his stand on lineal descent from Edward III., where the heirs of his uncle Lionel had entirely the advantage of him.

The people who had favoured, and would have adopted Henry IV., had now become alienated from the house of Lancaster, through the incapacity of the present king. Through that they had lost the whole of their ancient possessions, as well as their conquests in France. Nothing remained but heavy taxation and national exhaustion, as the consequence of all the wars in that kingdom. In this respect the very glory of Henry V. became the ruin of his son. While the people complained of their poverty and oppression in consequence of those wars, they were doubly harassed by the factious quarrels of the king's relatives. They had attached themselves to the duke of Gloucester, and he had been murdered in consequence of these factions, and, as was generally believed, at the instigation of the queen. Queen Margaret, indeed, completed the alienation of the people from the house of Lancaster. She was not only French, a nation now in the worst odour with the people of England, but through her they had lost Maine and Anjou, the beginning of all their losses. Coming into the kingdom, not only without any fortune, but under these unlucky circumstances, she took no pains to conciliate the popular good will. She was haughty, ambitious, and extremely vindictive. She made herself the mortal enemy of the "good duke of Gloucester," and had the credit of compassing his death. She allied herself successively with the dukes of Suffolk and of Somerset, noblemen, not only of the most determined hostility to Gloucester, but especially connected with the loss of France. She had vowed vengeance against the Londoners and the men of Kent for their share in the unpopularity of her favourites, and the death of Suffolk; and was reported to be at once unfaithful to the king, and bent on ruling, through him, on principles of despotism which were foreign to all English ideas.

These circumstances now drew the hearts of the people as strongly towards the duke of York as they had formerly been attracted to the house of Lancaster. They began to regard him with interest as a person whose rights to the throne had been unjustly overlooked. He was a man who seemed to possess much of the modest and amiable character of the Marches. He had been recalled from France, where he was ably conducting himself, as was believed, by the influence of the queen, and sent as governor into Ireland, as a sort of honourable banishment. But, though treated in a manner calculated to provoke him, he had retained the unassuming moderation of his demeanour. He had yet made no public pretensions to the crown, and, though circumstances seemed to invite him, showed no haste to seize it. There were many circumstances, indeed, which tended to make all parties hesitate to proceed to extremities. Though the queen was highly unpopular, Henry himself, though weak, was so amiable, pious, and just, that the public, though groaning under the consequences of his weakness, yet retained much affection for him. There were, also, numbers of nobles of great influence who had benefited by the long minority of the crown, who, though they disliked the queen's party, were afraid of being called on, in case another dynasty was established, to yield up the valuable grants they had obtained.

Thus the kingdom was divided into three parties: those who took part with Somerset and the queen, those who inclined to the duke of York, and those who, having benefited by the long reign of corruption, were afraid of any change, and endeavoured to hold the balance betwixt the extreme parties. Almost all the nobles of the north of England were zealous supporters of the house of Lancaster, and with them went the earl of Westmoreland, the head of the house of Neville, though the earls of Salisbury and Warwick, his relations, were the chief champions of the cause of York. With the duke of Somerset also

followed, in support of the crown, Henry Holland, duke of Exeter, Stafford, duke of Buckingham, the earl of Shrewsbury, and the lords Clifford, Dudley, Scales, Audley, and other noblemen. With the duke of York, besides the principal earls of Salisbury and Warwick, went many of the southern houses.

Such was the state of public feeling and the position of parties when the insurrecion of Cade occurred. The duke of York had made himself additionally popular by his conduct in Ireland. He had shown great prudence and ability in suppressing the insurrections of the natives; and thus made fast friends of all the English who had connections in that island. No doubt the members of his own party used every argument to incite the duke to assert his right to the throne, and thus to free the country from the dominance of the queen and her favourites. That it was the general opinion of that time that the Cade conspiracy was a direct feeler on the part of the Yorkists is clear from Shakespeare, who wrote so much nearer to that day. He makes York say:—

"I have seduced a headstrong Kentish man,
John Cade of Ashford,
To make commotion, as full well he can,
Under the title of John Mortimer.
* * * * * *
This devil here shall be my substitute:
For that John Mortimer, which now is dead,
In face, in gait, in speech he doth resemble
By this I shall perceive the commons' mind
How they affect the house and claim of York
Say he is taken, racked, and tortured:
I know no pain they can inflict upon him
Will make him say, I moved him to those arms
Say that he thrive, as 'tis great like he will:
Why, then from Ireland come I with my strength,
And reap that harvest which that rascal sowed."

Accordingly, York appeared upon the scene; but Cade had already paid the penalty of his outbreak. On his way to town, York, passing through Northamptonshire, sent for William Tresham, the late speaker of the House of Commons, who had taken an active part in the prosecution of Suffolk. But, on his way to the duke, Tresham was fallen upon by the men of lord Grey de Ruthyn and murdered, as was supposed, at the instigation of the queen, in revenge of her favourite's death. York proceeded to London, as related, and appeared before the king, where he demanded of him to summon a parliament for the settlement of the disturbed affairs of the realm. Henry promised, and York meantime retired to his castle of Fotheringay.

Scarcely had York retired when Somerset arrived from France, and the queen and Henry hailed him as a champion sent in the moment of need to sustain the court party against the power and designs of York. But Somerset came from the loss of France, and, therefore, loaded with an awful weight of public odium; and with her vindictive disregard of appearances, queen Margaret immediately transferred to him all her old predilection for Suffolk. When the parliament met, the temper of the public mind was very soon apparent. Out of doors the life of Somerset was threatened by the mob, and his house was pillaged. In the commons, Young, one of the representatives of Bristol, moved that, as Henry had no children, York should be declared his successor. This bold proposal seemed to take the house by surprise, and Young was committed to the Tower. But a bill was carried to attaint the memory of the duke of Suffolk, and another to remove from about the king the duchess of Suffolk, the duke of Somerset, and almost all the party in power. Henry refused to accede to these measures, any further than promising to order a number of inferior persons from the court for twelve months, during which time their conduct might be inquired into. On this the duchess of Suffolk and the other persons indicted of high treason during the insurrection, demanded to be heard in their defence, and were acquitted.

The spirit of the opposite factions ran very high, the party of Somerset accusing that of York of treasonable designs, and that of York declaring that the court was plotting to destroy the duke as they had destroyed Gloucester. York retired to his castle of Ludlow, in Shropshire, where he was in the very centre of the Mortimer interest, and under plea of securing himself against Somerset, he actively employed himself in raising forces, at the same time issuing a proclamation of the most devoted loyalty, and offering to swear fealty to the king on the sacrament before the bishop of Hereford and the earl of Shrewsbury. The court paid no attention to his professions, but an army was led by the king against him. York, instead of awaiting the blow, took another road and endeavoured to reach and obtain possession of London in the king's absence. On approaching the capital, he received a message that its gates would be shut against him, and he then turned aside to Dartford, probably hoping for support from the same population which had followed Cade. The king pursued him, and encamping on Blackheath, sent the bishops of Ely and Winchester to demand why he was in arms. York replied, from no disloyal design, but merely to protect himself from his enemies, who sought his ruin. The king replied that his movements had been watched since the murder of the bishop of Chichester by men believed to be in his interest, and still more since his partisans had openly boasted of his right to the crown; but that for his own part, he himself believed him to be a loyal subject, and his own well-beloved cousin.

York demanded that all persons "noised or indicted of treason" should be apprehended, committed to the Tower, and brought to trial. All this the king, or his advisers, promised, and as Somerset was one of the persons chiefly aimed at by York, the king gave an instant order for the arrest and committal of Somerset, and assured York that a new council should be summoned, in which he himself should be included, and all matters decided by a majority. At these frank promises, York expressed himself entirely satisfied, disbanded his army, and came bareheaded to the king's tent. What occurred, however, was by no means in accordance with the honourable character of the king, and savoured more of the councils of the queen. No sooner did York present himself before Henry and begin to enter upon the causes of complaint, than Somerset stepped from behind a curtain, denied the assertions of York, and defied him to mortal combat. So flagrant a breach of faith showed York that he had been betrayed. He turned to depart in indignant resentment, but he was informed that he was a prisoner. Somerset was urgent for his trial and execution, as the only means of securing the permanent peace of the realm. Henry had a horror of spilling blood, but in this instance York is said to have owed his safety rather to the fears of the ministers, than any act of grace of the king, who was probably in no condition of mind to be capable of thinking upon the subject. There was already

a report that York's son, the earl of Marche, was on the way towards London with a strong army of Welshmen to liberate his father. This so alarmed the queen and council that they agreed to set free the duke, on condition that he swore to be faithful to the king, which he did at St. Paul's, Henry and his chief nobility being present. York then retired to his castle of Wigmore.

In the autumn of 1453 the queen was delivered of a son, who was called Edward. There was a great cry in the country, that this was no son of the king—a cry, no doubt, zealously promoted by the partisans of York—but it did not prevent the young prince being recognised as the heir apparent, and created prince of Wales, earl of Cornwall and Chester. But the king had now fallen into such a state of imbecility, with periods of absolute insanity, that those who had denied the legitimacy of his mother, queen Catherine, might well doubt their opinion, for Henry's malady appeared precisely that of his reputed grandfather, Charles VI. of France. Such was his condition, that parliament would no longer consent to leave him in the hands of the queen and Somerset. In the autumn, the influence of parliament compelled the recall of York to the council; and this, as might have been expected, was immediately followed by the committal of Somerset to the Tower. In February parliament re-commenced its sittings, and York appeared as lieutenant or commissioner for the king, who was incapable of opening it in person. It had been the policy of the queen to keep concealed the real condition of the king; but with York at the head of affairs this was no longer possible. The house of lords appointed a deputation to wait upon him at Windsor. The archbishop of Canterbury, who was also lord chancellor, was dead; and the lords seized upon the occasion as the plea for a personal interview, according to ancient custom, with the king. Twelve peers accordingly proceeded to Windsor, and would not return without seeing the monarch. They found him in such a state of mental alienation that, though they saw him three times, they could perceive no mark of attention from him. They reported him utterly incapable of transacting any business; and the duke of York was thereupon appointed protector, with a yearly salary of two thousand marks. The Lancastrian party, however, took care to define the duties and the powers of this office, so as to maintain the rights of the king. The title of protector was to give no authority, but merely precedence in the council, and the command of the army in time of rebellion or invasion. It was to be revocable at the will of the king, should he at any time recover soundness of mind; and, in case that he remained so long incapacitated for government, the protectorate was to pass to the prince on his coming of age. The command at sea was entrusted to five noblemen, chosen from the two parties, and the government of Calais, a most important post, was taken from Somerset, and given to York.

With all this change, the session of parliament appears to have been stormy. The duke of York had instituted an action for trespass against Thorpe, the speaker of the commons, and one of the barons of the Exchequer, and obtained a verdict with damages to the amount of one thousand pounds, and Thorpe was committed to prison till he gave security for that sum, and an equal fine to the crown. In vain did the commons petition for the release of the speaker. The lords refused, and they were compelled to elect a new one. Many of the lords not feeling themselves safe, absented themselves from the house, and were only compelled to attend by heavy fines. The duke of Exeter was taken into custody, and bound to keep the peace; and the earl of Devonshire, a Yorkist, was accused of high treason and tried, but acquitted. So strong was the opposition of the court party, that even York himself was compelled to stand up and defend himself.

These angry commotions were but the prelude to a more decisive act. The king was found something better, and the fact was instantly seized on by the queen and her party to hurl York from power, and reinstate Somerset. About Christmas the king demanded from York the resignation of the protectorate, and immediately liberated Somerset. This was not done without Somerset being at first held to bail for his appearance at Westminster to answer the charges against him, but he appealed to the council on the ground that he had been committed without any lawful cause, and the court party being now in the ascendant, he was at once freed from his recognisances. The king himself appeared anxious to reconcile the two dukes; a circumstance more convincing of his good nature than of his sound sense, for it was an impossibility. He would not restore the government of Calais to the duke of Somerset, but he took it from York and retained it in his own hands. York perceived that he had been regularly defeated by the queen, and he retired again to his castle of Ludlow to plan more serious measures.

The duke of Norfolk, the earl of Salisbury and his son, the celebrated earl of Warwick, destined to acquire the name of the King-maker, hastened there at his summons, and it was resolved to attempt the suppression of the court party by force of arms. They were quickly at the head of three thousand men, and with these they hoped to surprise the royalists. But no sooner did the news of this approaching force reach the court, than the king was carried forth at the head of a body of troops equal to those of York, and a march was commenced against him. The royal army had reached St. Albans, and on the morning of the 23rd of May, as it was about to resume its progress, the hills bordering the high road were beheld covered with the troops of York. This army marching under the banners of the house of York, now for the first time displayed in resistance to the sovereign, halted in a field near the town, and sent forward a herald announcing that the three noblemen were come in all loyalty and attachment to the king, but with a determination to remove the duke of Somerset from his councils, and demanding that he and his pernicious associates should be at once delivered up to them. The Yorkists declared that they felt this to be so absolutely necessary, that they were resolved to destroy these enemies to the peace of the country or to perish themselves. An answer was returned by or for the king, "that he would not abandon any of the lords who were faithful to him, but rather would do battle upon it, at the peril of life and crown."

It would have appeared that the royal army had a most decided advantage by being in possession of the town, which was well fortified, and where a stout resistance might have been made in the narrow streets; but, spite of this, the superior spirit of the commanders on the side of York, triumphed over the royalists. York himself made a desperate attack on the barriers at the entrance of the town, while Warwick,

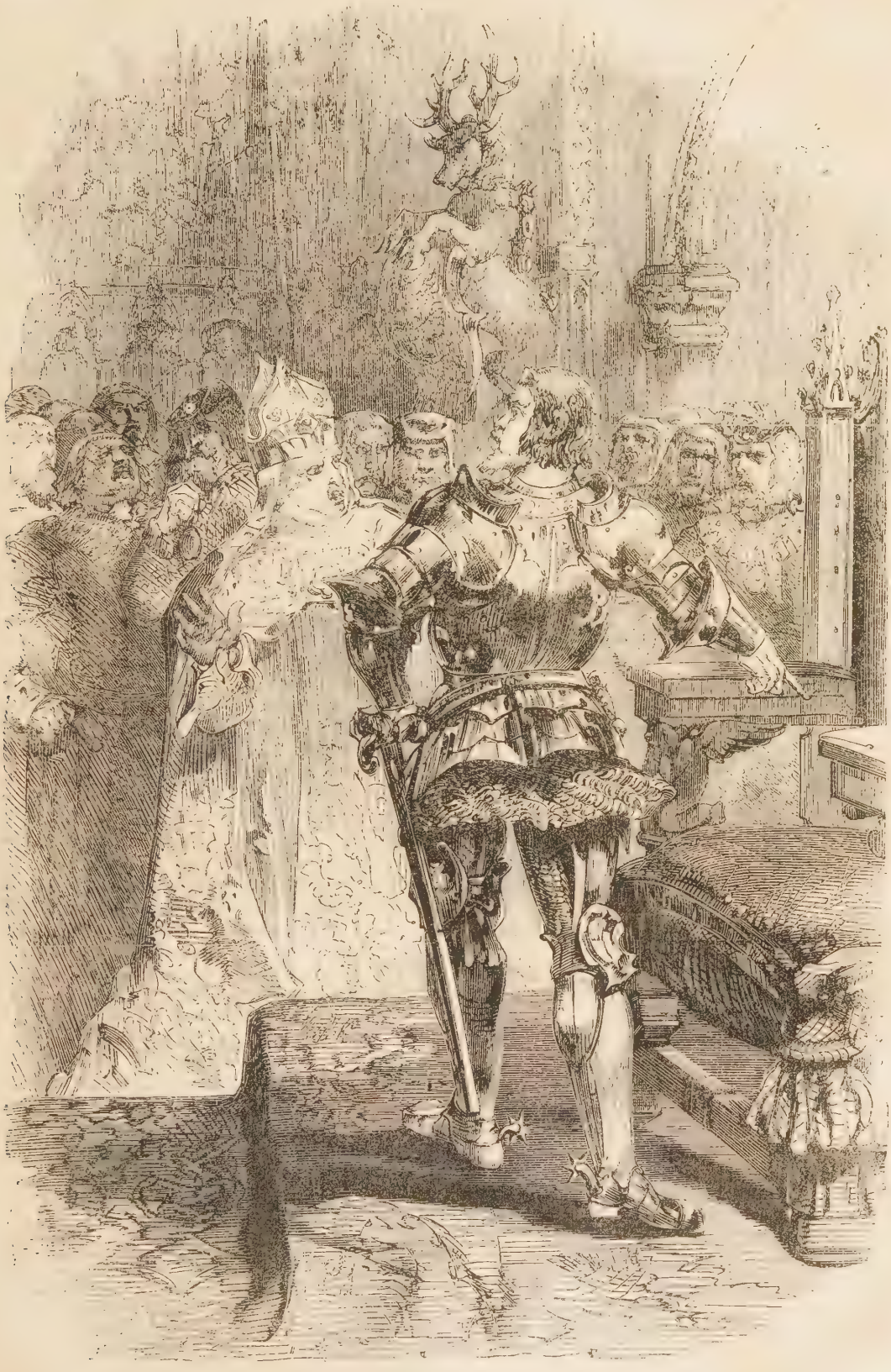
searching the outskirts of the place, found, or was directed by some favouring persons to, a weak spot. He made his way across some gardens, burst into the city, and came upon the royal forces where he was little expected. Aided by this diversion, York redoubled his attack on the barriers, and, notwithstanding their resolute defence by lord Clifford, forced an entrance. Between the cries of "A York! a York!" "A Warwick! a Warwick!" confusion spread amongst the king's forces, they gave way, and fled out of the town in utter rout. The slaughter among the leaders of the royal army was terrible. The duke of Somerset, the earl of Northumberland, and lord Clifford were slain; the king himself was wounded in the neck, the duke of Buckshrine of St. Albans, and afterwards to his apartment in the abbey. It might have been supposed that the fallen king, being now in the hands of York and his party, the claims of York to the crown would have been asserted. But at this time York either had not really determined on seizing the throne, or he did not deem the public fully prepared for so great a change. On the meeting of parliament it was repeated that York and his friends sought only to free the king from the unpopular ministers who surrounded him, and to redress the grievances of the nation. That party complained—with what truth does not appear—that, on the very morning of the battle, they had sought to explain these views and intentions in letters, which the duke of

Siege Operations. 15th century. A French Town taken by the English. From the Royal MS. 14, E. 4.

ingham and lord Dudley in the face, and the earl of Stafford in the arm. All these were arrow wounds, and it was plain that here again the archers had won the day. The fall or wounds of the leaders, indeed, settled the business, and saved the common soldiers; for though Hall reports that eight thousand, Stowe that five thousand men fell, yet Crane, in a letter to his cousin, John Paston, written at the time, declares that there were only six score, and Sir William Stonor states that forty-eight only were buried in St. Albans.

The king was found concealed in the house of a tanner; and there York visited him, on his knees renewed his vows of loyal affection, and congratulated Henry on the fall of the traitor Somerset. He then led the king to the Somerset and Thorpe, the late speaker of the commons, had withheld from his grace. The king acquitted York, Salisbury, and Warwick of all evil intention; pronounced them good and loyal subjects, granting them a full pardon. The peers renewed their fealty, and parliament was prorogued till the 12th of November. Thus the first blood had been drawn at the battle of St. Albans in these civil wars, and all appeared restored to peace. But it was a deceitful calm; oceans of blood were yet to flow.

Scarcely had parliament reassembled when it was announced that the king had relapsed into his former condition. Both lords and commons refused to proceed with business till this matter was ascertained and settled. The lords then requested York once more to resume the pro-



RICHARD DUKE OF YORK CLAIMING THE CROWN. (See page 604.)

tectorate for the good of the nation; but this time he was not to be caught in his former snare. He professed his insufficiency for the onerous office, and begged of them to lay its responsibilities on some more able person. He was quite safe in this course, for he had now acquired a majority in the council, and the office of chancellor and the governorship of Calais were in the hands of his two stout friends, Salisbury and Warwick. Of course the reply was that no one was so capable or suitable as he; and then he expressed his willingness to accept the protectorate, but only on condition that its revocation should not lie in the mere will of the king, but in the king with the consent of the lords spiritual and temporal in parliament assembled. The protectorate was to devolve, as before, on the prince of Wales, in case the malady of the king continued so long.

York might think that he was now secure from the machinations of the queen, but he was deceived. That never-resting lady was at the very moment in full activity of preparation for his defeat; and no sooner did parliament meet after the Christmas recess than Henry again presented himself in person, announced his restoration to health, and dissolved the protectorate. The duke of York resigned his authority with apparent good will. Calais and the chancellorship passed from Salisbury and Warwick to the friends of the queen; the whole government was again on its old footing. Two years passed on in apparent peace to the nation, but in the most bitter party warfare at court. The queen and her associates could never rest while the duke of York and his friends were permitted to escape punishment for the late outbreak. The relatives of Somerset and the earl of Northumberland, and of the other nobles slain at St. Albans, were encouraged to demand with vehemence vengeance on the Yorkists. Both parties surrounded themselves more and more with armed retainers, and everything portended fresh acts of bloodshed and discord. The king endeavoured to avert this by summoning a great council at Coventry in 1457. There the duke of Buckingham made a formal rehearsal of all the offences committed by York and his party, at the conclusion of which the peers fell on their knees and entreated the king to make a declaration that he would never more show grace to the duke of York or any other person who should oppose the power of the crown, or endanger the peace of the kingdom. To this the king consented; and then the duke of York, Salisbury, and Warwick renewed their oaths of fealty, and all the lords bound themselves never for the future to seek redress by arms, but only from the justice of the sovereign.

At the close of this council the duke of York retired to Wigmore, Salisbury to Middleham, and Warwick to Calais. It was soon found that, notwithstanding all these oaths and these royal endeavours, the same animosity was alive in the two hostile parties, and the king tried still further the hopeless experiment of reconciliation. He prevailed on the leaders to meet him in London. On the twenty-sixth of January, 1458, the leaders of the York and Lancaster factions appeared in the metropolis, but they came attended by armed retainers—the duke of York with one hundred and forty horse, the now duke of Somerset with two hundred, and Salisbury with four hundred, besides fourscore knights and esquires. York and his friends were admitted into the city, probably as being more under the control of the authorities; for the lord mayor, at the head of five thousand armed citizens, undertook to maintain the peace. The Lancastrian lords were lodged in the suburbs. Every day the Yorkists met at the Blackfriars and the Lancastrians at the Whitefriars, and after communicating with each other, the result was sent to the king, who lay at Berkhamstead with several of the judges. The result of their deliberations was this:—The king, as umpire, awarded that the duke of York, and the earls of Salisbury and Warwick, should, within two years, found a chantry for the good of the souls of the three lords slain in battle at St. Albans; that both those who slew and those who were slain at that battle should be reputed faithful subjects; that the duke of York should pay to the dowager duchess of Somerset and her children the sum of five thousand, and the earl of Warwick to the lord Clifford one thousand marks; and that the earl of Salisbury should release to Percy lord Egremont all the damages he had obtained against him for an assault, on condition that the said lord Egremont should bind himself to keep the peace for ten years.

The next day, March 25th, the king came to town and went to St. Paul's in procession, followed by the whole court, the queen conducted by the duke of York, and the lords of each party walking arm in arm before them, in token of perfect reconciliation. But real reconciliation was distant as ever. The causes of contention lay too deep for the efforts of the simple and well-intentioned king, or even for the subtlest acts of diplomacy. It was the settled strife for a crown, and swords, not oaths, could alone decide it. The whole show was a mocking pageant. The slightest spark might any day light up a flame which would rage through the whole kingdom; and in little more than a month such a spark fell into the combustible mass. News arrived that a large fleet of merchantmen from Lübeck had been attacked by Warwick as it passed down the channel, and five sail of them captured, after a severe contest, and carried into Calais. As Lübeck was a town of the Hanseatic League, that powerful association—which was in amity with England—speedily sent commissioners to London demanding redress. Warwick was summoned to appear before the council; and, whilst in attendance, a quarrel arose betwixt his followers and those of the court. Warwick believed, or feigned—to escape out of the scrape into which he had fallen—that there was a design upon his life. He fled to his father, Salisbury, and York, and they resolved that their only safety lay in arms. There was a story circulated, and thoroughly believed, in the Yorkist party, that the queen, who never forgot or forgave an enemy, kept a register, written in blood, of all the Yorkist chiefs, and had vowed never to rest till they were all exterminated. In fact, both parties were arrived at that pitch of excited rancour which nothing could appease but the blood of their opponents. The feud was no longer confined to the nobles and their immediate retainers; the leaven of discord had leavened the whole lump of the nation. The conflicting claims had been discussed till they had penetrated into every village, every family, into the convents of the monks, and the cottages of the poor. One party asserted that the duke of York was an injured prince, driven from his hereditary right by a usurping family, and now sought to be destroyed by them. The other contended that, though Henry IV. had deposed Richard II., he had been the choice of the nation; that his son had made the name of England glorious; and that more than

sixty years of possession of the crown was itself sufficient warrant for its retention. That the duke of York had, over and over again, sworn eternal fealty to Henry VI., which was in itself a renunciation of any claim he might previously possess; and that, in seeking now to deprive the king of his throne, he was a perjured and worthless man. One party argued that York owed his life to the clemency of the king; and the other replied that the king equally owed his to that of Richard, who had him in his power at St. Albans.

While the nation was thus heating its blood by these disputes, the heads of the different factions were busy preparing to meet each other in the field. The three lords spent the winter in arousing their partisans. Warwick called around him at Calais the veterans who had fought in Normandy and Guienne. On the other hand, the court distributed in profusion collars of white swans, the badge of the young prince; and the friends of the king were invited by letters, under the privy seal, to meet him in arms at Leicester. The spring and summer had come and gone, however, before the rival parties proceeded to actual extremities. The finances of the court impeded its proceedings; and the Yorkist party still averred that it had no object but its own defence and the rescue of the government from traitors.

At length, on the 23rd of September, 1459, the earl of Salisbury marched forth from his castle of Middleham, in Yorkshire, to form a junction with York on the borders of Wales. Lord Audley, with a force of ten thousand men, far transcending that of Salisbury, sought to intercept his progress at Blore-Heath, in Staffordshire; but the veteran Salisbury was too subtle for his antagonist. He pretended to fly at the sight of such unequal numbers; and, having thus seduced Audley to pass a deep glen and torrent, he fell upon his troops when part only were over; and, throwing them into confusion, made a dreadful slaughter of them. Some writers contend that Salisbury had only five hundred men with him; but this appears incredible, for they left lord Audley with two thousand of his men dead on the field, and took prisoner lord Dudley with many knights and esquires. The earl pursued his way unmolested to Ludlow, where York lay, and where they were joined in a few days by Warwick with his large reinforcement of veterans under Sir John Blount and Sir Andrew Trollop.

The king, queen, and lords of their party, had assembled an army of sixty thousand men. With these they advanced to within half a mile of Ludiford, the camp of York near Ludlow, on the 10th of October; and Henry, after all his experience, had the goodness, or the weakness, once more to renew his offers of pardon and reconciliation on condition that his opponents should submit within six days. York and his colleagues replied that they had no reliance on his promises, because those about him did not observe them, and that the earl of Warwick, trusting to them last year, nearly lost his life. Yet they still protested that nothing but their own security caused them to arm, and that they had determined not to draw the sword against their sovereign unless they were compelled. It was concluded by the royal party to give battle on the 13th, but they found York posted with consummate military skill. His camp was defended by several batteries of cannon, which played effectively on the royal ranks as they attempted to advance. The royalists, therefore, deferred the engagement till the next morning, and were relieved from that necessity by Sir Andrew Trollop, who was marshal of the Yorkist army, going over in the night with all his Calais auxiliaries to the king. Trollop had hitherto believed the assurances of the Yorkist leaders that they sought only government redress, and not subversion of the throne; but something had now opened his eyes, and, as he was a staunch royalist, he acted accordingly. This event struck terror and confusion through the Yorkist army. Every man was doubtful of his fellow; the confederate lords made a hasty retreat into Wales, whence York and one of his sons passed over to Ireland, and the rest followed Warwick, who hastened to Devonshire, and thence escaped again to Calais.

Nothing shows so strikingly the feeble councils of the royal camp as that these formidable foes should be permitted to decamp without any pursuit. A vigorous blow now made on the panic-struck enemy, might for ever have rid the king of his mortal antagonists. But Henry, always averse to blood, was no doubt glad of this unexpected escape from shedding it, and his generals were weak enough to acquiesce. The court returned to London, and satisfied themselves with passing an act of attainder against the duke and duchess of York, and their sons the earls of Marche and Rutland, against the earl and countess of Salisbury, and their son the earl of Warwick, the lord Clinton, and various knights and esquires. Even this was painful to the morbidly tender mind of Henry. He reserved to himself the right to reverse the attainder, if he thought proper, and refused to permit the confiscation of the property of lord Powis, and two others who had thrown themselves on his clemency.

Meantime the insurgent chiefs, though dispersed, were not crushed. York had great popularity in Ireland; Warwick had a strong retreat in Calais. To deprive him of this, the duke of Somerset was appointed governor, and, encouraged by the conduct of the Calais veterans at Ludiford, set out to drive Warwick from that city. But he met with a very different reception to that which he had calculated upon. He was assailed by a severe fire from the batteries, and compelled to stand out. On making an attempt to reach Calais from Guisnes, he found himself deserted by his sailors, who carried his fleet into Calais, and surrendered it to their favourite commander. Warwick stationed a sufficient force to watch Somerset in Guisnes, and, so little did he care for him, set out with his fleet, and dispersed two successive armaments sent to the relief of Somerset from the ports of Kent. When that was done, he sailed to Dublin, to concert measures with York, and returned in safety to Calais, having met the high-admiral, the duke of Exeter, who at sight of him escaped into Dartmouth.

In the spring of 1460 the Yorkists, who had fled so rapidly from the royal army at Ludiford, and had seemed to vanish as a mist, were again on foot, and in a daring attitude. They had sedulously disseminated proclamations throughout the country, still protesting their innocence of any designs on the crown; that the king himself was so well assured of it that he refused to ratify the act of attainder, but that he was in the hands of the enemies of the nation. These documents concluded by saying the maligned lords were resolved now to prove their loyalty in the presence of the sovereign. Following up this, Warwick

landed, in June, in Kent—the great stronghold of the house of York next to the marches of Wales. He had brought only fifteen hundred men with him, but he was accompanied by Coppini, the pope's legate, who had been sent indeed to Henry, but was gained over by Warwick. In Kent they were joined by the lord Cobham with four hundred men; by the archbishop of Canterbury, who had received his preferment from York during his protectorate; and by a great number of the knights and gentlemen of the county. As he advanced towards the capital, people flocked to him from all sides, till his army amounted to thirty, some say forty, thousand men. He entered London on the 2nd of July, and proceeding to the convocation prevailed on no less than five bishops to accompany him to an interview with the king, who was lying at Coventry. The legate issued a letter to the clergy, informing them that he had laid it before the king; that the Yorkists demanded nothing but personal security, peaceable enjoyment of their property, and the removal of evil counsellors. All this was calculated to turn the credulous, or to prevent their swelling the forces of the court.

Henry advanced to Northampton, where he entrenched himself in a strong camp. On arriving before it, Warwick made three successive attempts to obtain an interview with the king, but finding it unavailing, the legate excommunicated the royal party, and set up the papal banner in the Yorkist camp. For this he was afterwards recalled by the pope, imprisoned, and degraded; but for the time it had its effect. Warwick gave the king notice that, as he would not listen to any overtures, he must prepare for battle at two in the afternoon on the 10th of July, 1460. The royal party made themselves certain of victory, but were this time confounded by lord Grey of Ruthyn going over to the enemy, as Sir Andrew Trollop had done by the other party at Ludlow. Grey introduced the Yorkists into the very heart of Henry's camp, and the contest was very quickly decided. Warwick ordered his followers to spare the common soldiers, and direct their attacks against the leaders; and accordingly of these there were slain three hundred knights and gentlemen, including the duke of Buckingham, the earl of Shrewsbury, and the lords Beaumont and Egremont. A second time Henry fell into the hands of his rebellious subjects, but they treated him with all respect. The queen and her son escaped into Wales, and thence into Scotland, after having been plundered on the way by their own servants.

The victors then marched back to London, carrying the king along with them a captive, but with studied appearance of being still at the head of his loving subjects. He entered the city, as in triumph, Warwick riding bareheaded before him, carrying the sword. Writs were issued in his name, applauding the loyalty of the very man who had made war on and seized his person, and a parliament was summoned for the redress of grievances, the chief of these being the acts issued last year in the parliament at Coventry, attainting the Yorkist leaders, which, of course, were abolished. This was scarcely effected, when the duke of York himself arrived from Ireland, at the head of five hundred horse. He rode into Westminster, entered the House of Lords, and advancing to the throne, laid his hand on the gold cloth, and seemed to wait as in expectance that he should be invited to seat himself there. But no such invitation was given. In fact, it would have been to act in opposition, on the part of the peers, to all the assurances that from first to last had been made by York and his friends, that he sought no such thing. It was now, however, the intention of York to throw off the mask, and openly lay claim to the crown. The manner in which the public, both aristocracy and people, had flocked to the standard of Warwick, led him to believe that it was now safe to declare himself; but he had himself defeated, in a great measure, his own object. His constant assurances that he sought only reform, not the subversion of the royal authority, his repeated oaths of fealty, had convinced all parties, except that of his own private friends, that he was sincere in his declarations, and they esteemed him for his honourable conduct to the gentle and inoffensive king. When, therefore, he did declare his intention of seizing the crown, the astonishment and disapprobation were proportionate.

As all remained silent when he laid his hand on the throne, he turned and looked as if in expectation on the assembled nobles. The archbishop of Canterbury, to put an end to the embarrassing dilemma, asked him if he would not pay his respects to the king, who was in the queen's apartment. York replied that he knew no one to whom he owed that title; that he was subject to no man in that realm, but, under God, was himself entitled to the sovereignty. The peers preserved a profound and discouraging silence; and York, finding not that response which he had hoped, left the house. It was, however, only to take possession of the palace as his hereditary right. Thence he sent in to the peers a written demand of the crown, tracing his descent, showing its priority to that of the line of Lancaster, and that by every plea of right, law, and custom, the possession of the throne centred in him. To this he demanded an immediate answer. This demand was carried by the lords to the king, who, on hearing it, said,—"My father was king: his father also was king. I have worn the crown forty years from my cradle; you have all sworn fealty to me as your sovereign, and your fathers have done the same to my fathers; how, then, can my right be disputed?"

The lords resolved to take the matter into consideration, as if it were a thing to be decided by evidence, without any heat or violence. They called upon the judges to defend, to the best of their ability, the claims of the king. But the judges objected that they were judges not advocates; that it was their business not to produce arguments but merely to decide on such as were advanced. They declared this to be a case above the law, and only to be decided by the high court of parliament. The lords then called upon the king's serjeants and attorneys, who also endeavoured to escape from the dangerous task, but were not permitted, their office being, in reality, to give advice to the crown.

The peers then proceeded to the discussion of this great question. They objected to York's claims, that he had really renounced any right given him by descent, from repeatedly swearing fealty to Henry; that the many acts of parliament passed to sanction the right of the house of Lancaster themselves were sufficient and had authority to defeat any measure of title; that the duke bore the arms of Edmund, the fifth son of Edward III., and not those of Lionel, the third son, from whom he claimed, showing that he himself held that to be his true descent. York replied to all these arguments, but especially to that wherein he knew the main force to lie, the effect of his

own oaths. This he declared nugatory, inasmuch as those oaths were of necessity and constraint, and, therefore, acknowledged by all men in all ages to be utterly void.

The result was that the lords came to the conclusion which the power of outward circumstances rather than their real convictions dictated. They attempted a compromise, which, had Henry had no issue, might have suceeeded, but which, as it went to disinherit the son of Henry, and much more the son of Margaret, was certain to produce fresh conflicts. The queen, whose resolute spirit would have been worthy of all admiration, had it been accompanied by a spirit of liberality and conciliation, was sure never to acquiesce in the rejection of her own son while she could move a limb, or raise a soldier. The verdict of the lords was that York's claim was just, but should not take effect during the lifetime of the present king. Possibly, had the question been decided by the commons, they might have taken a more constitutional view of it, such as that body did ages afterwards:—that the crown of England was no object of mere inheritance, but was the free gift of the people, who had in this case settled it by repeated acts of parliament on the house of Lancaster. But it is not to be forgotten, that even they would have been called on to decide with the victorious army of Warwick overawing their conclusions. The decision of the peers was accepted by York and his two sons Marche and Rutland, who swore not to molest the king, but to maintain him on his throne; and, on the other hand, Henry gave his assent to the bill, declared any attempt on the duke high treason, and settled estates on him and his sons as the succeeding royal line.

But Margaret of Anjou never for a moment conceded this repudiation of the rights of her son. She upbraided Henry for his unnatural conduct, and quitting her retreat in Scotland, appeared in the midst of her northern friends, calling on them by every argument of loyalty to the throne, and security to themselves, to take the field against the traitor York. The earl of Northumberland, the lords Dacre, Clifford, and Neville were soon in arms. They assembled at York; and Margaret, roused to the highest state of indignation by the disinheriting of her son, put forth all her powers to attach adherents to her standard. She assumed the most fascinating affability; she lavished her caresses and her promises on all whom she came near. She excited the jealousy of the northern barons by depicting the insolent assumption of the southern nobles, who had presumed to give away the crown, as if it were their own; and she promised to every one unlimited plunder of the estates and property of the people south of the Trent. These arts and allurements speedily brought thirty thousand men to her standard. The earls of Somerset and Devon joined them there.

York and Salisbury set out in all haste from London to oppose this growing force. They seem not to have been duly informed of its real strength, for they pushed forward with only five thousand men. They received a rude admonitory attack at Worksop, in Nottinghamshire, on the 21st of December; but, still advancing, York threw himself, before Christmas, into the strong castle of Sandal. Here it was the evident policy of York to await the arrival of his son, the earl of Marche, who was collecting forces in the marches of Wales; but either he was straitened for provisions, or was weak enough to be influenced by the taunts of the queen, who sent him word that it did not become the future king of England to coop himself up in a fortress, but to dare to meet those whom he dared to depose. He issued into the open country, in defiance of the earnest warnings of Salisbury and Sir David Hall, and gave battle to the queen's troops near Wakefield. The duke of Somerset commanded the queen's army. He led on the main body himself, and gave the command of one wing to the earl of Wiltshire, and the other to lord Clifford, ordering them to keep concealed till the action had commenced, and then to close in upon York. This was done with such success that York, who fell with great fury on Somerset, found himself instantly surrounded. Two thousand of his men were speedily slain, and the greater part of the remainder compelled to surrender. He himself, with most of his commanders, were left dead upon the field; the veteran Salisbury was taken, conveyed to the castle of Pontefract, with several knights and gentlemen, and there beheaded.

When the body of York was found his head was cut off and carried to queen Margaret, who rejoiced excessively at the sight, uttered most unfeminine reproaches upon it, and ordered it to be crowned with a paper crown in mockery, and placed upon the walls of York. Whethamstede, a contemporary, says that the duke was taken alive, and beheaded on the field. At all events, lord Clifford brought the head to the queen, stuck upon a spear; and this ferocious nobleman, whose father was killed at the battle of St. Albans, not satisfied with this revenge, perpetrated the murder of York's son, Rutland, with a fell barbarity which has covered his name with infamy. This youth, who was but about seventeen years of age, handsome and amiable, was met by Clifford as he was endeavouring to escape across the bridge of Wakefield in the care of his tutor, Sir Robert Aspall. The poor boy, seeing the bloody Clifford, fell on his knees, and entreated for mercy. The savage demanded who he was; and Aspall, thinking to save him by the avowal, said it was the younger son of York. Then swore Clifford—"As thy father slew mine, so will I slay thee, and all thy kin;" and plunging the dagger into his heart, ruthlessly bade the tutor go and tell his mother what he had done.

The spirit of "the she-wolf of France" seemed to animate all her army on this occasion. There was nothing but the butchery, and exultation in it. Margaret thought she had now destroyed the danger in destroying York. "At this deadly blood-supping," says Hall, "was much joy and great rejoicing: but many laughed then that sore lamented after—as the queen herself and her son; and many were glad of other men's deaths, not knowing that their own were near at hand, as the lord Clifford and others."

The revenge soon came. The earl of Marche, York's eldest son, was advancing to prove that York was still alive in the new possessor of the title. Yet before his blow of vengeance fell, Margaret had one more triumph. She had pursued her march on London after the battle of Wakefield, and had reached St. Albans. But there she came in contact with the army of Warwick. Flushed with victory, her forces fell upon the enemy. Warwick had posted himself on the low hills to the south-east of the town. The royalists penetrated to the very town cross, where they were repulsed by a strong body of archers. But they soon made their way by another street through the town, and the battle raged on the heaths lying betwixt St. Albans and Barnet. The last troops which made a stand were a body of Kentish

men, who, maintaining the conflict till night, enabled the Yorkists to retreat from the victorious van, and disperse. The king was found in his tent under the care of lord Montague, his chamberlain, where he was visited by Margaret and his son, whom he received with the liveliest joy. The Yorkists in this second battle of St. Albans, fought February 17th, 1461, lost about two thousand men. Edward, called "the late earl of Marche," was proclaimed a traitor, and rewards offered for his apprehension. But the the atrocious murder of his brother reached him; and the intelligence arousing the Welsh borderers, they flocked to his standard, breathing vengeance. His march was harassed by a party of royalists under Jasper Tudor, earl of Pembroke, the king's half-brother, chiefly consisting of Welsh and Irish. To free himself of them, Edward turned upon them at Mortimer's Cross, near Hereford. A dreadful battle ensued, in which Edward gained a complete victory, slaying nearly four thousand of the royalists.

Edward IV.

success of this action was defeated by the insubordination of the troops. They were chiefly borderers, who had been led on by hopes of plunder, and had been freely promised it by Margaret and her allies. Nothing could induce them to advance further. They were only bent on ravaging the neighbourhood, and the citizens of London, alarmed at such a horde of robbers, closed their gates against them and held out for York.

Edward was rapidly marching thitherward. He was at Gloucester when the news of the fall of his father and Jasper Tudor, the commander, escaped, but his father, Owen Tudor, the second husband of Katherine of Valois, and ancestor of the Tudor line of sovereigns, was taken prisoner, and, with Throgmorton and seven other captains, was beheaded at Hereford, in retaliation for those who had been similarly put to death after the battle of Wakefield. The news of this butchery reaching Margaret before the battle of St. Albans, instigated her to retaliate again by the execution of lord Bonville and Sir Thomas Kyriel, who had so much distinguished himself in France. The

spirit of deadly malice was now raging betwixt the contending parties, and one deed of cruelty provoked another.

Edward found no further obstacle on his march towards London. The terrible chastisement of the royalists made a deep impression. His force grew as he advanced. He soon joined Warwick, and collected his dispersed troops. Once united, they were more than a match for the royalists.

ference of her enemies—a preference they had never disguised since the murder of Gloucester. She sent from Barnet into the city demanding supplies, and, though the lord mayor was inclined to comply, the people stoutly refused to let any provisions pass. A party of four hundred horse were sent to enforce the demand; they plundered the northern suburbs, and would have continued their depreda-

Queen Margaret and the Robber of Hexham. (See page 612.)

When Edward approached London he was welcomed as a deliverer. The lawless army of the queen had carried terror wherever they came. They had plundered the town of St. Albans, and stripped its ancient abbey, and this so incensed its abbot, the chronicler Whethamstede, that he abandoned the royal party and became a Yorkist. The queen was as impolitic as her soldiers. She threatened the people of London with her vengeance for their open pre-

tions in London itself, but the people fell upon them, and drove them out. Such was the situation of affairs when Edward and Warwick appeared. The gates were joyfully thrown open, and Edward rode in triumph into the city. He was still but in his nineteenth year, of a remarkably handsome person, of a gay and affable disposition, and reputed to be highly accomplished. The fate of his father and brother, and the recent conduct of the queen, added greatly

to the interest which he excited. While lord Falconbridge reviewed a body of troops in the fields of Clerkenwell, Neville, the bishop of Exeter, seized the opportunity to harangue the crowded spectators. He drew a miserable picture of the imbecility of the king, of the haughty and bloody spirit of the queen, and the calamities which had resulted from both; declared that Henry, by joining the queen's forces, had violated the award of parliament, and forfeited the crown. He then demanded whether they would still have him for king. They shouted, "No, no!" He then asked whether they would have Edward for king, and they cried, "Yes, yes! long live king Edward."

The popular feeling being thus ascertained, a great council was convoked by the Yorkists on the 3rd of March, 1461, which confirmed the verdict of the public, declared Henry to have justly forfeited the crown by breaking his oath and joining in proceedings against the duke of York, who had thus been slain; and on the 4th Edward rode in procession to Westminster Hall, where he mounted the throne, and made a speech to the thronging thousands, detailing the just claims of his family, according to hereditary succession. His speech was received by loud acclamations. He then adjourned to the abbey church, where he repeated the same harangue to the same consenting audience, and was duly proclaimed by the heralds in the customary form by the style and title of king Edward IV.

Thus terminated the reign of Henry VI.; but neither his life nor the strife and troubles which attended it.

Great Seal of Edward IV.

CHAPTER LXXIV.

Reign of Edward IV.—Edward's Coronation—The Battle of Towton—Henry escapes to Scotland—Queen seeks Aid in France—The Battle of Hexham—Henry made Prisoner—Confined in the Tower—Edward marries Lady Elizabeth Gray—Advancement of her Relations—Attacks on the Family of the Nevilles—Warwick negotiates with France—Marriage of Margaret, the King's Sister, to the Duke of Burgundy—Marriage of the Duke of Clarence with a Daughter of Warwick—Battle of Banbury—Rupture between the King and his Brother, the Duke of Clarence—Rebellion of Clarence and Warwick—Clarence and Warwick flee to France—Warwick proposes to restore Henry VI.—Marries Edward Prince of Wales to his Daughter, Lady Ann Neville—Edward IV.'s reckless Dissipation—Warwick and Clarence invade England—Edward expelled.

Edward IV., at this period of his great success, and his acknowledgment by the people of London and the council as king, was in his twentieth year only. He was not only handsome of person and of popular manners, but he was bold, impetuous, and withheld by no such conscientious or peaceful scruples as his father. He was fond of pleasure, addicted to gallantry, and at the same time as ready to shed blood as he was to make love and revel in courtly pageants. Those feelings of the heart which might be inferred from his devoted attentions to the ladies, had no existence where his interests or his passions were concerned. He was utterly unscrupulous as to slaying any amount of his enemies in battle, or destroying them on the block. Those slow and reluctant approaches to sanguinary measures which had marked the earlier proceedings of his father and his coadjutors, had long since vanished in the heated progress of the strife, and Edward might be regarded as the representative of the leaders now on both sides, with the exception of the gentle and forgiving Henry. All were prepared to hew their way to their object through human lives, as a forester would make his way, by his axe, through a wood. Men's lives had ceased to be regarded with any human feeling. They were destroyed as enemies, whenever they appeared as such, not only without remorse, but with savage exultation. Everything portended a reign of terror. On the royalist side, Henry would, no doubt, have been most happy and thankful to have been allowed to enjoy the quiet of some conventual retreat with his beads and his books, for in this respect the testimony of all history confirms the view of Shakespeare when he makes him say:

> I'll leave my son my virtuous deeds behind;
> And would my father had left me no more!
> For all the rest is held at such a rate
> As brings a thousand-fold more cares to keep
> Than in possession any jot of pleasure.

But on that side queen Margaret was as energetic, as ambitious, and as resolute as her husband was the contrary. The circumstances into which she had been thrown had roused in her the spirit of a tigress fighting for its young. They had converted her blood into gall, and all

those poetical sentiments which her Provençal education had given her, and the wit and vivacity of mind, which might have rendered her a charming and even noble woman in happier scenes, had been crushed by the cruelty of her destiny. In contemplating her astonishing exertions, her fortitude amidst unexampled troubles and humiliations, her perpetual resistance to the most overwhelming disasters, the indomitable courage with which she rose from the most sweeping overthrows, refusing to yield or despair when the very last chance seemed annihilated, and the martial abilities which she displayed, it would be unjust to refuse her a high amount of admiration for such qualities in a woman; qualities which, had it not been for the darker side of her character, would have made her one of the proudest examples of female greatness. But Margaret allowed her enthusiasm in endeavouring to maintain the throne for her husband and her son, a noble ambition, to carry her into the most unfeminine cruelty, and into deeds of national mischief; to say nothing of conjugal failings attributed to her, which marred all her virtues, and still alienate from her the sympathy of posterity.

Still, so long as she could raise a man, there must be war to the death; and in Edward she had now to encounter an antagonist who would give blow for blow, shed blood for blood, without a moment's hesitation or a passing pang. He was just the man calculated to dash onwards through carnage and civil confusion to his object, not merely with indifference, but even with gaiety and pleasure. Woe to those who hoped anything from his compassion, or even ventured to jest, where the most distant circumstance could induce the supposition that the jest was aimed at him. Of this he gave a proof before quitting London to follow up the defeat of his enemies. One Walter Walker, a grocer, who lived at the sign of the crown, had said merrily, when speaking of the passing events, that he would make his son heir to the crown. This was witty enough to reach the court, and Edward had him forthwith arrested and put to death.

Margaret, on the warm reception of Edward in London, had retired northward with her marauding soldiers, who had so fatally damaged her cause by their outrages. Only three days after his reception in London, Edward despatched Warwick, the great bulwark of his cause, after her, and on the 12th of March, only five days afterwards, he followed himself. On reaching the earl of Warwick their combined troops amounted to forty thousand. The queen was exerting all her activity and eloquence amongst her northern friends, and lay at York with sixty thousand men. Everything denoted the eve of a bloody conflict.

This civil war was now known all over the world as the War of the Roses, a name said to be derived from a circumstance which took place in a dispute in the Temple Gardens betwixt Warwick and Somerset, at an early period of the rival factions. Somerset, in order to collect the suffrages of those on the side of Lancaster, is said to have plucked a red rose from a bush, and called upon every man who held with him to do the like. Warwick, for York, plucked a white rose, and thus the partisans were distinguishable by these differing badges. But in truth these badges were the badges of the two houses as far back as Edward I. Edmund, earl of Lancaster, brother of that king, wore the red rose, and the Black Prince the white. They were now adopted universally by the followers of the two houses, and rosettes of red or white ribbon, or even of paper, were worn by all the soldiers of these wars, red for Lancaster, white for York. They were soon to be equally dyed in a crimson torrent such as had yet rarely flowed in all the wars of England.

The vanguard of the two armies met at Ferrybridge, the passage of the river Ayre. The duke of Somerset was commander-in-chief of the royal army. The king, queen, and prince remained at York. Lord Clifford led the vanguard, and was opposed by lord Fitzwalter on the part of the Yorkists. The battle at the bridge was furious; Fitzwalter was killed. Lord Falconbridge was instantly sent forward to replace him, and instead of opposing Clifford in front in his strong position, allowing the troops there to hold him in play, he himself crossed the Ayre some miles above Ferrybridge, and falling unexpectedly on the rear of Clifford, routed his force, and revenged the death of Fitzwalter by that of Clifford himself. The Yorkists poured over the bridge, took possession of the town, and advanced towards Towton. Meantime, Warwick, excited by the temporary repulse at the bridge under Fitzwalter, had theatrically called for his horse, stabbed him in sight of the whole army, and kissing the hilt of his bloody sword, swore that he would fight on foot, and share every fatigue and disadvantage with the common soldiers. He then told them that every man who was not resolved to take a signal vengeance, and to act his part like a man in the battle about to be fought, was at full liberty to retire, but vowing the severest punishment to any one who in the battle itself should show the slightest symptom of yielding.

With minds inflamed to the utmost pitch of animosity, the two armies met on the morning of Palm Sunday, March 29th, in the fields betwixt the villages of Saxton and Towton, about ten miles south of York. Edward issued orders that no quarter should be given, no prisoners should be taken; it was to be a war of extermination—a command in so young a man sufficiently demonstrative of the pitiless severity of his character. The action commenced at nine o'clock in the morning, under circumstances most unfortunate for the Lancastrians. A snow-storm was blowing full in their faces; and lord Falconbridge seized at once on this circumstance by an adroit stratagem. He ordered the archers to advance, discharge their arrows, and again retire out of the reach of those of the enemy. The Lancastrians, believing themselves within bow-shot of the enemy, whose arrows did great execution amongst them, returned the compliment without being able to see where their arrows reached for the snow-flakes. The Yorkist archers were now out of their reach, and they fell useless. Again the Yorkists advanced and poured in a fresh flight with such effect that the Lancastrians, probably doubting of the success of their own arrows, rushed forward and came hand to hand with their opponents. It was now one terrible clash of swords, battle-axes, and spears, amid the thick-falling and blinding storm; and thus the two infuriated armies continued fighting desperately for nearly five hours. Towards evening the Lancastrians, disheartened by the fall of their principal commanders, broke and fled. They were pursued as far as Tadcaster with the fiercest impetuosity and a fearful slaughter. It was one of the bloodiest battles ever fought in Britain. According to a cotemporary historian, those who were employed to number and bury the dead, declared them to be thirty-eight thousand.

Amongst persons of rank and fortune who fell were the earls of Northumberland, Westmoreland, and Shrewsbury; the lords Clifford, Beaumont, Neville, Willoughby, Wells, Roos, Scales, Gray, Dacres, and Molineux, besides an extraordinary number of knights and gentlemen. Within three months four pitched battles had now been fought, and no less than sixty thousand people had perished in this question, which of two families should wear the crown.

The dukes of Somerset and Exeter, when the battle was lost, rode full speed to York, attended by a considerable number of lords and gentlemen, and, announcing the overthrow, made all haste with the king, queen, and prince to secure themselves in Scotland. Edward, by no means satiated with the blood of thirty-eight thousand men, made haste to immolate others who fell into his hands. Amongst these were the earl of Devonshire and Sir W. Hill, who were executed at York; the earl of Ormond at Newcastle, and Sir Thomas Fulford at Hexham. The heads of York and Salisbury, which were withering on the walls of York, where Margaret was said to have bade the executioner place them wide apart to receive the heads of Edward and Warwick, which she declared she meant to set there, were now taken down, and those of Devonshire and Hill set up in their places.

After celebrating the feast of Easter at York, Edward marched to Newcastle, and there leaving Warwick to keep the north in order, returned to London on the 26th of June.

On reaching Scotland Margaret placed Henry in a secure retreat at Kirkcudbright, and then hastened to Edinburgh, to try what could be done there towards renewing the contest, which no dispersion of her friends and forces could ever teach her to relinquish. There she found a boy sovereign, a divided court, and a country which had suffered by factions almost as deadly as her own. James I., who had seemed to return to his kingdom after his long captivity under such auspicious circumstances, full of intelligence and plans for the improvement of his country, married to the woman of his affections, and courted by both England and France, was soon murdered by the rude and lawless nobles whom he endeavoured to reduce to some degree of order and subordination. His son, James II., when arrived at years of maturity, endeavoured to recover from distracted England some of the places it had reft from Scotland formerly, but in besieging Roxburgh, in 1460, he was killed by the bursting of a cannon. His son was at this time a child of only eight years old, and the kingdom was governed by a council of regency; but the care of the king's person was committed to the queen mother, Mary of Guelders, who was ambitious of engrossing not only that duty, but the actual powers of the government. In this she was opposed by the powerful family of Douglas.

Margaret had no willing listeners amongst parties who were occupied with their own schemes and feuds. She had the difficult task of appealing to their various interests; and she found no one thing capable of fixing their attention till she hit on the idea of proposing the surrender of Berwick as the price of Scotland's assistance. That key of the northern frontiers of England, the object for whose possession so much blood had been spilled from age to age, was an object, the recovery of which at once gave her the command of the ears of the whole court. In addition to this, she proposed a marriage betwixt her son Edward, prince of Wales, and the eldest sister of the young king of Scotland. These treaties were carried into effect, and Berwick was put into the hands of the Scots on the 25th of April, 1461. For the fatal surrender of this important place, England never forgave the fugitive queen. In order to neutralise the effect of these treaties, Edward immediately entered into negotiations with the powerful and turbulent earl of Ross, the lord of the isles, and commissioned Warwick to treat with Scotland for a truce. By these means he prevented Scotland taking up the cause of the exiled family as a nation, though he could not prevent many persons, of all ranks, embracing it. While Henry and Margaret remained in Scotland, in spite of the pecuniary aid afforded them by the court, they were so hard put to it that they were compelled to pawn such jewels and plate as they had with them.

Edward, on his return to London, was crowned on the 29th of June. He then summoned a parliament to meet at Westminster on the 6th of July, but an invasion appearing not improbable, he prorogued it till the 4th of November. The sword and the scaffold had already so thinned the nobility, that only one duke, four earls, one viscount, and twenty-nine barons were summoned to this parliament. The great battle of Towton, which had laid so many of them low, had rendered the rest very submissive. There was no longer any hesitating betwixt the two families, or seeking of those compromises, which, in the end, only produced more discord. Whatever Edward dictated was accepted as law and constitution. Of course, Henry IV. was declared to have been an arrant usurper; and his posterity were held incapable, not only of wearing the crown, but of enjoying any estate or dignity in any portion of the British dominions for ever. Henry VI., Margaret, Edward called prince of Wales, the dukes of Somerset and Exeter, the earls of Northumberland, Devonshire, and Pembroke, and a vast number of lords, knights, and gentlemen, were attainted. Edward IV. was declared to be the only rightful king; and all those of the York party who had been declared traitors by the Lancaster party, and expelled from honours and estates, were restored. Edward did not omit to reward his friends out of the forfeited domains of their enemies, and he conferred additional honours on some of them. His eldest brother George was created duke of Clarence, his youngest brother, Richard, duke of Gloucester; the lord Falconbridge, who had rendered such service at Ferrybridge, was made earl of Kent; lord Bouchier, earl of Essex, and Sir John Neville, brother of Warwick, was made lord Montacute.

Having thus established his own dignity, and conferred these favours on his friends, Edward returned his best thanks to this obliging parliament, and dismissed it on the 21st of December.

The opening year of 1462 he inaugurated with fresh streams of blood. He brought John de Vere, earl of Oxford, and his son, Aubrey de Vere, to the block, for being found guilty of corresponding with Margaret. Sir William Tyrrel, Sir Thomas Tudenham, and John Montgomery were also executed for the same offence. All these distinguished personages were despatched on Tower-hill in February, under sentence pronounced in no civil court, but merely of a court-martial; a proof to what an extent the public was awed by the daring military character of the new king.

Meantime, nothing daunted, Margaret was exerting her

ingenuity to rouse a party in Scotland. She pleaded to deaf ears. Her traitorous surrender of Berwick brought her no real assistance; and she now sent over Somerset to endeavour to obtain succour from France. All these efforts were equally vain. Charles VII. died in 1460, and his successor, Louis XI.—one of the most selfish and cold-blooded men that ever sat on a throne—was immovable. Somerset, her ambassador, returned completely unsuccessful. He and his attendants had, indeed, been arrested by Louis when they attempted to escape in the guise of merchants, for fear of the despicable king giving them up to Edward to propitiate his favour. It was only through the earnest intercession of the count of Charolais, the son of the duke of Burgundy, that they were liberated. Louis XI. was cousin-german to both Margaret and Henry VI.; but such relationships weigh nothing with selfish men, in comparison to their own immediate interests. While this unwelcome news was arriving, Margaret was rendered the more uneasy and unsafe by the appearance of Warwick at the court of Scotland, proposing a marriage betwixt the Scottish queen and the victorious Edward of England. Under these circumstances, neither Margaret nor Henry were safe. She resolved, therefore, to make one more effort with Louis of France, and a personal one. By means of a French merchant, who owed her some kindness for past benefit, she managed to get over to France, where she threw herself at the feet of Louis, who was at Chinon, in Normandy. She was only able to reach his court by the assistance of the duke of Brittany, who gave her twelve thousand crowns.

But she might as well have thrown herself at the feet of any stone statue in the church of Chinon. Louis had not a feeling in him but of self. To all her pleadings of the claims of kindred blood, of the glory of restoring a fallen friend to a throne like that of England, of benefits which might be reciprocated when that was done, he was deaf as the adder. It was only when Margaret had recourse to the same temptation as she had thrown to so little purpose in the way of the Scotch, and talked of surrendering Calais, that the despicable monarch opened his ears. Then, indeed, he was all attention, and unbent into a smile and a word of condolence. He then sent off post haste to his most cunning minister, who was absent, commanding him to hasten to him, for there was a good game to be played, and good winnings to be had. Then he paid great public court to the woman who had followed him from place to place, praying to him on her knees, but without receiving an answer, and invited her to unite with him as sponsors to the infant son of the Duke of Orleans, afterwards Louis XII. of France.

Margaret agreed to surrender the rights of the crown in Calais, and that Henry should do the same. And what was to be the price of this sacrifice?—this sacrifice of this proud stronghold of England, this sacrifice of her own honour, and this last remaining fragment of her good fame in Britain? The paltry sum of twenty thousand livres! That was all that she could squeeze from the miserable French king for this intensely desired object. True, he had it still to win, for it was not in the possession of Margaret or her husband; but this acknowledged purchase from the Lancastrian king would give him great weight in any attempts to compel the surrender, and if Henry did again regain his throne, it must be made over to him at once. The facility with which Margaret thus gave away the most important possessions of England, showed that she had no real patriotic feeling towards her adopted country. It was not the country for which she struggled, but for her own mere family interests; those saved, she cared not at what cost to the people of England. This the nation saw, and, after this time, her name became odious to all but the partisans of her own faction in this country.

With her twenty thousand livres Margaret was enabled to engage the services of Pierre de Brezé, the seneschal of Normandy. He had been an old admirer of Margaret's, and now offered to follow her with two thousand men. With this force, after an absence of five months, she set sail for England, and attempted to land at Tynemouth, in October of 1462, but was repelled by the garrison. The fleet was now attacked by a terrible storm; the very elements seemed to fight against her. Many of her ships ran ashore near Bamborough. Yet, spite of all her difficulties, Margaret effected a landing, and gained possession of the castles of Bamborough, Dunstanburgh, and Alnwick. She sent for Henry from his safe hiding-place at Harlech castle, in Merionethshire, where she had left him while she went to France, and was gathering some considerable forces of Scotch and French, when Warwick approached with twenty thousand men, and news was received that Edward was advancing with an equal number. Edward halted at Newcastle, but Warwick advancing, divided his forces into three bodies, and simultaneously invested the three strongholds. Somerset surrendered Bamborough on condition that himself and Sir Ralph Percy, and some others, should be admitted to take the oath of fealty to Edward, and be restored to all their honours and estates; and that the rest of the two garrisons, with the earl of Pembroke, the lord de Roos, and some others, whose lands had been conferred on Edward's friends, which could not, therefore, be now restored, should be conveyed in safety to Scotland. This defection of her chief supporters was a dreadful blow to the queen; and, to add to her misfortunes, 500 of her French followers, who had established themselves in Holy Island, were attacked and cut to pieces by Sir Robert Ogle. Alnwick Castle still held out in the hands of the brave de Brezé and lord Hungerford; but the earl of Angus coming up with a party of relief, the besieged took the opportunity to make a sally and escape from the castle to their friends. Bamborough and Dunstanburgh were restored by the king to lord Percy; but Alnwick he gave to Sir John Ashley, to the great offence of Sir Ralph Gray, who had formerly won it for Edward, and now expected to have had it.

It might have been supposed that all hope of ever restoring the Lancastrian cause was now at an end. But in the soul of Margaret hope never seemed to die. With an admirable and indomitable resolution, she again turned all her efforts to reconstruct a fresh army. She traversed Scotland, drew together her scattered friends, joined them to her French auxiliaries, whom she again mustered on the continent; and by the spring of 1464 was in a condition once more to march into England. For some time her affairs wore a promising aspect. She retook the castles of Alnwick, Bamborough, and Dunstanburgh. Somerset, Sir Ralph Percy, and the rest who had made their peace with Edward, hearing of her successes, again flew to her standard. Sir Ralph Gray, who resented the preference given to Sir John Ashley by Edward in the disposal of Alnwick,

came over to her, and was made commander of Bamborough.

Edward, on the news of these reverses, despatched the lord Montacute into the north to raise his forces there, and make head against the never-resting queen. He met with Sir Ralph Percy on Hedgley Moor, near Wooller, on the 25th of April, defeated his forces, and killed Sir Ralph. Having received fresh reinforcements from the south, he advanced towards Margaret's main army, and encamped on a plain, called the Levels, near Hexham. There, on the 15th of May, the two armies came to a general action, and, after a long and bloody conflict, the Lancastrians were again completely routed. Poor king Henry fled for his life, and this time managed not to be left in the hands of his enemies. "He was the best horseman of that day," says Hall; "for he fled so fast that no one could overtake him; yet he was so closely pursued, that three of his horsemen, or body guard, with their horses trapped in blue velvet, were taken, one of them wearing the unfortunate monarch's cap of state, called a bicocket, embroidered with two crowns of gold, and ornamented with pearls." The duke of Somerset, the lords Roos and Hungerford, were taken in the pursuit. Somerset was immediately beheaded in Hexham, and Roos and Hungerford suffered the same fate on the Sandhills at Newcastle. Many of their followers were successively executed in that town and at York. Sir Ralph Gray reached his castle of Bamborough, but Warwick came up and besieged him. Bamborough was deemed an impregnable fortress; and Sir Ralph congratulated himself in that opinion; for he knew that he had no mercy to expect from Edward, if he fell into his hands. His confidence proved vain. Warwick brought up the king's two largest cannon, called Newcastle and London, a brass piece, called Dysson, and with these made such breaches that the garrison was compelled to surrender. Gray was dragged forth from beneath a piece of the fallen wall more than half dead; but he was preserved with great care by the victors, that he might be presented to Edward, as an especial gratification to his love of revenge. Accordingly, Gray was brought before him at Doncaster, where Edward had been lying, to recover from the effects of his dissolute life; and then, Gray's spurs being hacked off by his own cook with his cleaver, his coat-of-arms torn off his back and reversed, he was drawn to the town's end, and there beheaded.

Meantime Margaret and her son, with a few attendants, were flying wildly through the neighbouring forests from the tender mercies of this sanguinary young king. She was endeavouring to reach the Scottish borders, when they were met by a party of marauders, with which the border country abounded.

The whole of Margaret's adventures in this memorable flight have so much the air of romance, that some historians have doubted their truth; but as these recitals are made by Chastellain in his "Chronique des Ducs de Burgoyne," who declares that he heard them related by Margaret herself to the Duchess de Bourbon at St. Pol, and as they are confirmed by Monstrellet and Prevost, there is no reason to doubt them. According to these accounts, the robbers seized the queen and her son, their attendants fleeing at the first sight of them. The queen, it appears, was carrying with her a number of the crown jewels, and some large vessels of gold and silver, as a resource during their abode in Scotland. The thieves, fired by the sight of the rich dresses of the queen and her son, which were probably of cloth of gold or silver, ornamented with precious stones—articles which only princely persons were allowed by the sumptuary laws of the times to wear—and of the gold and silver articles, dragged them from their horses, and threatened them, with drawn swords, with death and all manner of indignities. The queen on her knees implored mercy, and avowed who she was; but the villains who had hold of her, seeing their associates busy dividing the rich booty, turned to them, and she seized the opportunity, while they were quarrelling over it, to fly with her son. The fugitives rushed onward, not knowing whither they were going, till night overtook them. Nearly fainting with terror, fatigue, and hunger, as the moon broke through the clouds they beheld a huge man, armed, and with threatening gestures hastening towards them. Imagining that it was one of the band who had robbed them who had now overtaken her, she expected nothing but death; but, mustering her characteristic resolution, she bade the man see that if he hoped for booty it was useless, for she and her child were even stripped of their upper garments for their value.

The man appeared to be one of the numerous outlaws who harboured there, many of them having seen better days. He was touched by her appeal, and Margaret, perceiving it, said, "Here, my friend, save the son of your king! I charge thee to preserve from violence that innocent royal blood. Take him, and conceal him from those who seek his life. Give him a refuge in thine obscure hiding-place, and he will one day give thee free access to his royal chamber, and make thee one of his barons."

The man, struck by the majestic presence of the queen, the pleading innocence of the prince, and the words of Margaret, knelt, and vowed that he would sooner die a thousand deaths than injure or betray them. He carried the child in his arms to his cave, on the south bank of a little stream which runs at the foot of Blockhill, and, from this circumstance, still called "Queen Margaret's cave." There the man's wife made them right welcome, and, after two days' concealment, the outlaw succeeded in meeting with De Brezé, and his followers soon afterwards discovered the duke of Exeter and Edward Beaufort, from the execution of his brother now duke of Somerset; and with their followers Margaret escaped to Scotland.

But Scotland would now afford her no asylum. Edward had diligently fenced against all the endeavours of the indefatigable Margaret. He had concluded treaties of alliance with Scotland, the king of France, the dukes of Burgundy and Brittany, with Denmark, Poland, Castile, and Aragon. The pope had sent to congratulate him on his succession, and all the world appeared agreed to consider the dynasty of Lancaster at an end for ever, and that of York immovably established. Margaret had speedy proof of the perilous position of her fortunes. She found it necessary to keep the closest concealment in her old retreat of Kirkcudbright; but even here, a traitor of the name of Cork, an Englishman who knew her well, discovered her, and formed a scheme to make a profit by delivering her to king Edward. He succeeded in seizing her staunch friend de Brezé and the squire Barville, and hurried them on board a vessel prepared for the purpose. He next secured Margaret and the prince, and conveyed them on board and set sail. But in the night de Brezé

FIRST MEETING OF EDWARD IV. AND LADY ELIZABETH GRAY. (See page 615.)

had slipped his hands out of his fetters, released his squire, and waited for morning. With its first rays he beheld, to his astonishment, the queen and prince. He and his squire rose against the captors, five in number; but, attacking them with the oars, they knocked them overboard, and made their way again to land. There they lay concealed till Barville had been to Edinburgh, to learn the position of affairs. Nothing could be worse. The treaty of marriage betwixt the prince of Wales and Margaret, the sister of James III., had been broken off through the influence of the duke of Burgundy, the steady enemy of her house since his quarrel with the duke of Bedford. Burgundy was uncle to the queen-mother of Scotland. He was the most powerful prince now in Europe, and, therefore, his wish was law to his niece the Scottish queen. Here was another proof that the fall of her dynasty was in public opinion sealed, and Margaret, in the transports of rage at this act of Burgundy, was said to have declared, that "if he ever fell into her hands, she would make the axe pass between his head and shoulders."

Yet it was her fortune to be driven to the dominions of this great enemy by her strange fate. She found that it was necessary that she should quit Scotland with all speed; and, setting sail in a small vessel with her son, her faithful attendant de Brezé, who had spent his whole fortune in her service, with Sir John Fortesque, and a number of other ruined adherents of Lancaster, to seek a refuge amongst her friends in the north of England, she was overtaken by tempests and driven on the coast of Flanders, and into the small port of Ecluse. Though thus thrown into the power of a formidable enemy—against whom she had just uttered such direful threats—in the lowest condition of destitution and desertion, yet still undaunted, she did not hesitate to demand an audience and a reconciliation with Burgundy. She had neither money, jewels, nor credit to propitiate the pitiless people amongst whom she had come, who upbraided her with her misfortunes as her own work, and expressed their amazement that she should, of all places in the world, seek the dominions of him whose life she had so violently menaced. The duke, to whom she sent a messenger, received him very coldly, and sent word to Margaret, by an envoy of his own, that he was so much engaged in important affairs that he could not wait upon her. But this extraordinary woman, who had passed through more sufferings from defeats, loss of all her rank, and state, and comforts, from hunger, cold, and poverty, than would have killed almost any other woman—who for five days had subsisted on a third share of a single herring, and who was often, for long intervals together, without a single farthing of money, and with scarcely decent clothes, was not to be thus repelled. The duke was at St. Pol; she was now at Bruges, and she set forward thence to reach him in a common carrier's cart with a canvass tilt—like a country wife going to market—and attended by only three maids. The devoted Pierre de Brezé and a few other gentlemen followed the cart to prevent it being attacked; and thus she went on from town to town, the people at every place running in crowds to see the former great queen of England reduced to this lamentable condition. On the way she met the count of Charolois, the son of the duke of Burgundy, who took compassion on her, and presented her with five hundred crowns, which he happened to have about him. On the road to Bethune she narrowly escaped a less welcome meeting,—that of two hundred English horsemen who lay in wait for her.

Carriage of the Fifteenth Century.

At length she reached St. Pol, succeeded in softening the heart of the great duke, and was received with much affection by her near relative, the duchess of Bourbon, to whom she related her many vicissitudes and adventures, as they are recounted by Chastellain. The duke sent her back in great honour to Bruges, attended by a troop of horse to prevent the English from attacking her, who had declared they would not capture, but kill her, and thus rid themselves of their only formidable enemy. Parties of English soldiers were out from Calais for this purpose, no doubt deeply incensed against her by her endeavour to make over that stronghold to France. From Bruges she went to Bar, Amboise, and other castles and courts of the French princes, till she finally settled at the castle of Kuerere in the diocese of Verdun, near the town of St. Michiel, in Lorraine, being allowed by her father two thousand livres a year, the utmost he could afford. There and at Angers the exiled queen principally spent the next seven years, Sir John Fortesque remaining as the prince's tutor, and where he wrote for his use his celebrated work, "De Laudibus Legum Angliæ." At Kuerere Margaret received the melancholy news of the capture and imprisonment of her husband. For about twelve months the unfortunate monarch had contrived to elude the eager quest of his enemies. He went from place to place amongst the friends of the house of Lancaster in Westmoreland, Lancashire, and Yorkshire. At the various halls and castles where he sojourned, tradition has to this day retained the memory of his presence. There are "King Henry's chamber," and "King Henry's parlour," still pointed out, the bath that he used, and the boot, spoon, and glove that he left with his host, Sir Ralph Pudsay, at Bolton-hall, Yorkshire. He was at length betrayed by Cantlow, a monk of Abingdon, and he was taken by the servants of Sir John Harrington, as he sat at dinner at Waddington-hall. He was treated with the utmost indignity on his way to London. He was mounted on a miserable hack, his legs being tied to his stirrups, and an insulting placard fixed on his back. At Islington Warwick met the fallen king, and disgraced himself by commanding the thronging spectators to show no respect to him. To enforce his command by his own example, he led the unhappy man three times round the pillory, as if he had been a common felon, crying, "Treason! treason! Behold the traitor!"

Enduring all this ignominy with the utmost meekness, he was, however, roused by the blow of a rude churl to the expression, "Forsooth and forsooth, ye do foully to smite the Lord's anointed." He was thus conducted to the Tower.

Edward, now freed from his enemies, considered himself established beyond a fear on the throne. He created lord Montacute earl of Northumberland for his services at Hexham, and lord Herbert earl of Pembroke. He issued a long list of attainders to exhaust the resources of his opponents and increase those of his adherents. He then passed an act for the resumption of the crown lands to supply a royal income; but this was clogged by so many exceptions that it proved fruitless. He then gave himself up to mirth and jollity, and in the pursuit of his pleasures made himself so affable and agreeable, especially with the Londoners, that, in spite of his free gallantries, he was very popular. So strongly did he now seem to be grounded in the affection of his subjects, that he ventured to make known a private marriage, which he had contracted some time before, though he knew that it would give great offence in several quarters.

It is a curious circumstance that in the early part of the reign of Henry VI., two ladies of royal lineage, and one of them of royal rank, had condescended to marry private gentlemen, to the great scandal of their high-born connections. One of these was Katherine of Valois, the widow of Henry V., and mother of Henry VI., who married Owen Tudor. The other was Jacquetta of Luxembourg, the widow of the great duke of Bedford, regent of France, who married Sir Richard Wydville. Both Tudor and Wydville were men of remarkable beauty; and both were imprisoned and persecuted for the offence of marrying, without permission of the crown, princesses who chose to fall in love with them. Wydville regained his liberty by the payment of a fine of a thousand crowns. Tudor's persecutions were more severe and prolonged. Yet, from these two scandalous *mésalliances*, as they were regarded by the court and high nobility, sprang a line of the most remarkable princes that ever sat upon the English throne. The blood of both these ladies mingled in the burly body of Henry VIII. and his descendants. We have seen how Tudor became the grandfather of Henry VII.; we have now to observe how Wydville became the grandfather of Henry's wife, Elizabeth of York.

Jacquetta had several children by Sir Richard Wydville, one of whom, Elizabeth, was a woman of much beauty and great accomplishments. She had been married to Sir John Gray of Groby, a Lancastrian, who fell at the second battle of St. Albans. His estate was consequently confiscated, his widow with several children returned to her father, and was living at his seat at Grafton, in Northamptonshire. Edward being out on a hunting party in the neighbourhood, took the opportunity to call on the duchess of Bedford. There he saw and was greatly struck with the beauty of the lady Gray. She, on her part, seized the occasion to endeavour to secure some restitution of their property for her children. The whole of her subsequent life showed that she was not a woman to neglect such opportunities. She threw herself at the feet of the gay monarch, and with many tears besought the king to restore to her innocent children their father's patrimony.

Lady Gray made more impression than she probably intended. Edward was perfectly fascinated by her beauty and spirit. He raised her from her suppliant posture, and promised her his favour. He soon communicated to her the terms on which he would grant the restitution of her property, but he found in Elizabeth Wydville, or Gray, a very different person to those he had been accustomed to meet. She firmly refused every concession inconsistent with her honour, and the king, piqued by the resistance, became more and more enamoured.

On the 1st of May, 1464, he married her at Grafton in the presence only of the priest, the clerk, the duchess of Bedford, and two female attendants. Within a few days after the marriage, he set out to meet the Lancastrians in the north; but the battles of Hedgley Moor and Hexham were fought before his arrival; and on his return he become anxious to open the matter to his council and to obtain its sanction. Accordingly, at Michaelmas, he summoned a general council of the peers at the abbey of Reading, where he announced this important event. Amongst the peers present were Edward's brother, the duke of Clarence, and the great king-maker, Warwick. To neither of these individuals was the transaction agreeable. To Clarence it appeared too inferior a choice for the king of England, though Elizabeth Gray, by her mother's side, was of princely blood. But to Warwick there was offence in it, personal and deep. He had been commissioned by Edward to solicit for him the hand of Bona of Savoy, the sister of the queen of France. The proposal had been accepted; the king of France had given his consent; the treaty of marriage was actually drawn; and there lacked nothing but the ratification of the terms agreed upon, and the bringing over the princess to England. At this moment came the order to pause in the proceedings, and the mystery was soon cleared up by the confident rumour of this sudden matrimonial caprice of the king. Warwick returned in high dudgeon; to Edward he did not endeavour to conceal it; but the time for revenge of his injured honour was not yet come; and, therefore, after the royal announcement in the council, Clarence and Warwick took Elizabeth by the hand, and introduced her to the rest of the peers. A second council was held at Westminster, in December, and the income of the new queen was settled at 4,000 marks a-year.

It was not to be expected that this sudden elevation of a simple knight's daughter to the throne would pass without much murmuring and discontent, which was probably the more fully expressed as it was shared by the all-powerful Warwick and the king's brothers. There were busy rumours that the politic old duchess, Jacquetta, and her daughter, had practised magical arts upon the king, and administered philters; and that, recovering from their effect, he had grievously repented, and endeavoured to free himself. But Edward's whole conduct towards the queen showed the falsity of this jealous gossip; and to make it obvious that she was of no mean parentage, he invited to the coronation her mother's brother, James of Luxembourg, with a retinue of a hundred knights and gentlemen. On the feast of Ascension he created, in honour of the queen, thirty-eight knights of the Bath, selecting four of them from the city of London. In return for this compliment, the lord mayor, aldermen, and the different companies met the queen at Shooter's-hill, and conducted her in state to the town. On Saturday, to please the people, she was conducted in a horse-litter through the principal streets, preceded by the new knights.

The next day, Sunday, she was crowned with much splendour; and the following week was devoted to tournaments and public festivities.

But if the king had made apparent her noble birth and his continued affection for her, it became speedily as apparent that the marriage of a subject was to be followed by all its inconveniences. Elizabeth, though raised to the throne, might still be said to be on her knees, imploring the favour of the king. There was nothing which she thought too much for her numerous relations, and the king displayed a marvellous facility in complying with her requests. Her father was created earl Rivers, and soon after the lord Mountjoy, a partisan of the Neville's, was removed to make way for him as treasurer of England; and again, on the resignation of the earl of Worcester, the office of lord high constable was conferred on him. That was very well for a beginning, but it was nothing to what followed; every branch of the queen's family must be aggrandised without delay. She had five sisters, and every one of these was married to one of the highest noblemen in the realm. One to the duke of Buckingham, one to the heir of the earl of Essex, a third to the earl of Arundel, a fourth to lord Gray de Ruthyn, who was made earl of Kent, and the fifth to lord William Herbert, created earl of Huntingdon. Her brother Anthony was married to the heiress of the late lord Scales, and endowed with her estate and title. Her younger brother John, in his twentieth year, was married to the wealthy old dowager duchess of Norfolk, in her eightieth year; such was the shameless greed of this family. The queen's son, Thomas Gray, was married to the king's niece, the daughter and heiress of the duke of Exeter.

These unblushingly mercenary weddings were not witnessed without great disgust and resentment by the old nobility. In many of them their own plans and contracts were unceremoniously set aside. Even the interests and feelings of the great Warwick were disregarded. He had solicited the hand of the heiress of Exeter for his own nephew, and he now saw the queen snatch the splendid prize from him, and secure it to her own family. The old duchess Jacquetta is represented as a consummate intriguante and match-maker, and her daughter appears to have been well instructed in her arts. All the branches of the Grays and Wydvilles had been staunch Lancastrians. Jacquetta, as widow of Bedford, was especially of that faction; but they now all came eagerly thronging into the royal service, to make sure of the loaves and fishes. A more open and scandalous prostitution of every principle for selfish advantage, or a more palpably significant warning against the marriage of a subject by royalty has rarely been exhibited.

The great family of the Nevilles looked on all this with ominous gloom. Hitherto it had enjoyed all the favour and emolument which were now turned so lavishly upon the Wydvilles. Of the three sons of the earl of Salisbury, one was now lord chancellor and archbishop of York, the other was created lord Montacute, and then earl of Northumberland, with the ample estates of the Percies. But far above them all soared Warwick. He had put down Henry VI., and set up Edward. He had hitherto been the king's chief minister and general; he held the wardenship of the west marches towards Scotland, was lord chamberlain, and governor of Calais, the most important and lucrative appointment in the king's gift, worth fifteen thousand crowns per annum. The value of royal grants alone, which he held independent of his patrimonial estates, was eighty thousand crowns a year. The magnificence and liberality of his style of living was in full accord with his wealth and rank. No less than thirty thousand people are said to have lived daily at his board, at his different manors and castles. Stowe tells us that, "when he came to London, he held such an house that six oxen were eaten at a breakfast, and every tavern was full of his meat; for who that had any acquaintance in that house, he should have as much sodden and roast as he might carry upon a long dagger." When we add to the power of Warwick that of the house of Montacute and of Westmoreland, all Nevilles; and when we add that Warwick was as much worshipped by all military men for his bravery as for his frankness and princely profusion, we perceive the peril which the thoughtless Edward ran in wounding the pride and irritating the jealousy of the most potent of English nobles.

Fresh causes of disunion arose betwixt the king and Warwick. A marriage had for some time been in agitation between Margaret, the king's sister, and count Charolois, the son and heir of the duke of Burgundy. The count was sprung from the house of Lancaster, and even when his father showed the most settled coldness towards Henry VI. and Margaret, had displayed a warm sympathy for them. It was a good stroke of policy, therefore, to win him over by this marriage to the reigning dynasty. But Warwick, who in his former intercourse with Burgundy in France, had conceived a deep dislike to him, opposed this match, and represented one with a son of Louis XI. of France as far more advantageous. To Warwick's arguments were opposed the evident policy of maintaining our commercial intercourse with the Netherlands, and of possessing so efficient an ally on the borders of France against the deep and selfish schemes of Louis. But in the end Warwick prevailed. He was sent over to France to negotiate the affair with Louis. Warwick went attended with a princely train, and with all the magnificence which distinguished him at home, more like that of a great sovereign than of a subject. Louis, who never lost an opportunity of sowing jealousies amongt his enemies, even while he appeared to be honouring them, met Warwick at Rouen, attended by the queen and the princesses. The inhabitants, obeying royal orders, went out and escorted Warwick into the city with banners, and processions of priests, who conducted the earl to the cathedral, and then to the lodgings prepared for him at the Jacobins. There also Louis and the court took up their quarters, and for twelve days, during which the conference lasted, Louis used to visit the earl in private, passing through a side door into his apartments. With all this secret and familiar intercourse, there were no pains taken to conceal its existence; and the consequence was such as the astute and mischievous Louis intended. Reports were forwarded to Edward from those whom he had placed in Warwick's train which roused his ever uncalculating anger. He hastened to the house of Warwick's brother—the archbishop of York, and chancellor of the kingdom—demanded the instant surrender of the seals; and, enforcing the act of resumption of crown lands lately passed, deprived the archbishop of two manors formerly belonging to the crown.

Warwick returned, as may be supposed, in no very good humour, but still with every prospect of success in his mis-

sion. The court of France was agreeable to the match. And on the heels of the earl came the archbishop of Narbonne and the Bastard of Bourbon to complete the arrangements. They came prepared to offer an annual pension to Edward from Louis, and to pledge the king to submit to the pope Edward's demand for the restoration of Normandy and Aquitaine, which should be decided within four years. But the importance of these propositions, and the evident policy of at least appearing to listen to the terms of a monarch like that of France, had no weight with Edward, who was far more distinguished for petulance and rashness than for policy. He treated the French ambassadors with the most insulting coldness; and unceremoniously quitted the capital, leaving his ministers to treat with the ambassadors, and, in fact, to get rid of them. His resentment against Warwick made him not only thus forget the courtesy due to the envoys of a great foreign prince on the occasion —conduct sure to create its own punishment,—but he gave all the more favour to the suit of the count of Charolois from the same cause.

The count had sent over his relative, the Bastard of Burgundy, ostensibly to hold a tournament with lord Scales, the queen's brother, but really to press forward the match with the English princess. The duke of Burgundy dying at this juncture, all difficulties vanished. The princess was affianced to the new duke of Burgundy.

This completed the resentment of Warwick. The open insult offered to the court of France, and the rejection of the alliance which he had effected, sunk deep into his proud mind. He retired to his castle of Middleham, in Yorkshire; and occasion was taken of his absence from court to accuse him, on the evidence of one of queen Margaret's emissaries taken in Wales, of being a secret partisan of the Lancastrian faction. The fiery king summoned the great baron to London to answer the charge. He treated the summons with sullen disdain. The accuser was, therefore, forthwith sent down under guard to confront Warwick in his own castle. The charge failed; but Edward, resolved to mortify and humiliate the man to whom he owed his throne, affected still to believe him a secret ally of the Lancastrians, and that his own safety was threatened by him. He therefore summoned a body-guard of two hundred archers, without whose attendance he never stirred abroad. He expelled the Nevilles from court, and took every means to express his dislike and suspicion of that house. In this he was zealously encouraged by the queen's family. They were not satisfied with the extensive monopoly which they had acquired of honour, rank, and fortune: they could not feel at ease till they had put down the rival family of Neville—the only one from which they dreaded effectual injury. They excited the pride of the king by telling him that it became him to free himself from the tutelage in which that overgrown house held him and the crown. On the other hand, the Nevilles repaid the hatred of the upstart family of Wydville with interest; and from this moment, whatever might be the outward seeming, the feud betwixt these rival families was settled, deadly, and never terminated till it had completed the ruin of all parties.

At present the archbishop of York, though suffering under the immediate severity of the king, was too wise to give way to his resentment. He justly feared the influence of the Wydvilles with the king, and that it might prove most injurious to his own family. He therefore stood forth as a peacemaker. He volunteered a visit to earl Rivers, the queen's father; met him at Nottingham, and agreed on terms of reconciliation between the families. The king, queen, and court were keeping the Christmas of 1467 at Coventry. The archbishop hastened to his brother at Middleham, and prevailed upon him to accompany him to Coventry, where he was graciously received by Edward; all subjects of offence betwixt him and the relatives of the queen—especially her brothers-in-law, the lords Herbert, Stafford, and Audley—were arranged; and the king expressed himself so much pleased with the conduct of the archbishop, that he restored to him his two manors. This pacific state of things lasted for little more than a year. On the 18th of June, 1468, the king's sister set out on her journey to meet her husband in Flanders. The king accompanied her to the coast; and, as a proof that Warwick at this moment held his old position of honour at court, the princess rode behind him through the streets of London. A conspiracy having been discovered, or supposed, of several gentlemen with queen Margaret, Warwick and his brother, the earl of Northumberland, were joined with the king's brothers, Clarence and Gloucester, in a commission to try them; and the two Nevilles certainly executed their part of the trust with a zeal which looked like anything but disaffection. Very arbitrary measures were used towards the prisoners, several of whom were condemned and executed.

This calm was soon broken. The duke of Clarence had from the first shown as deep a dislike to the ascendancy of the Wydvilles as the Nevilles themselves. This drew him into closer intimacy with Warwick. He frequently withdrew for long periods from court, and was generally to be found at one of the residences of Warwick. It soon came out that there was a cause still more influential than his dislike of the queen's relations; it was his admiration of the earl's eldest daughter, Isabella, who was co-heiress of his vast estates. Warwick was delighted with the prospect of this alliance, for as yet the king having no male heir, and his only daughter being but four years old, Clarence stood as the next male heir to his brother. Edward, on the contrary, beheld this proposed connection with the utmost alarm. The Nevilles were already too powerful; and should Warwick succeed, through Clarence, in placing his descendants so near the throne, it might produce the most dangerous consequences to his own line. He therefore did all in his power to frustrate the marriage; but in vain. Clarence and Warwick retired to Calais, of which Warwick remained the governor; and there the marriage was celebrated, in the church of St. Nicholas, on the 11th of July, 1469.

With the exception of this annoying event, at this moment Edward appeared so firmly seated on his throne, and so well secured by foreign treaties with almost all the European powers, and especially with the dukes of Burgundy and Brittany, the latter of whom had recently become his ally, that he actually contemplated the enterprise of recovering by his arms the territories which his weak predecessor had lost in France. His hatred of the cold-blooded Louis XI., who, in political cunning, was infinitely Edward's superior, probably urged him to this idea. To draw off the attention of the different factions at home, and find some common medium of uniting them in action abroad, might be another. The most remarkable circumstance of all was, that

parliament, after its experience of the drain which these French wars had been to the blood and resources of the nation, received the king's proposal with cordial approbation.

But these dreams of martial glory were very quickly swept from the brain of the king by domestic troubles. At first these troubles appeared to originate in private and local causes, but there was such food for combustion existing throughout the kingdom, that the farther they went, the wider they opened, and at every step onwards assumed more and more the aspect of a Warwick and Clarence conspiracy. Nothing could be farther removed from such an appearance than the opening occurrence.

The hospital of St. Leonard's, near York, had possessed, from the reign of king Athelstan, a right of levying a thrave of corn from every ploughland in the county. There had long been complaints on the part of the public that this grant was grossly abused, and instead of benefiting the poor, as it was intended, was converted to the emolument of the managers. During the last reign many had refused in consequence to yield the stipulated thrave, and parliament had passed an act to compel the delivery. Now again the refusal to pay the demand was become general. The vassals had their goods distrained, and were themselves thrown into prison. This raised the peasantry, who were all of the old Lancastrian party, and regarded the present dynasty as usurpers and oppressors. They flew to arms under the leadership of one Robert Hilyard, called by the insurgents Robin of Redesdale, and vowed that they would march south and reform the government. Lord Montacute, earl of Northumberland, brother of Warwick, marched out against them, forming as they now did a body of fifteen thousand, and menacing the city of York. He defeated them, seized their leader Hilyard, and executed him on the field of battle.

So far there appeared certainly no hand of the Nevilles in this movement. Northumberland did his best to crush it, and Warwick and Clarence were away at Calais, thinking, apparently, not of rebellion, but of matrimonial festivities. But the very next move revealed a startling fact.

The insurgents, though dispersed, were by no means subdued. They had lost their peasant head, but they reappeared in still greater force, with two heads, and those no other than the lords Fitzhugh and Latimer, the nephew and the cousin-german of Warwick. Northumberland contented himself with protecting the city of York. He made no attempt to pursue this still more menacing body, who, dropping their cry of the hospital and the thrave of corn, declared that their object was to meet the earl of Warwick, by his aid and advice to remove from the councils of the king the swarm of Wydvilles, whom they charged with being the authors of the oppressive taxes, and of all the calamities of the nation. The young noblemen who headed the insurrection were assisted by the military abilities of an old and experienced officer, Sir John Coniers. At the name of Warwick, his tenants came streaming from every quarter, and, in a few days, the insurgent army numbered sixty thousand men.

Preaching at St. Paul's Cross. 15th century.

Edward, on the news of this formidable movement, called together what troops he could, and fixed his headquarters at the castle of Fotheringay. Towards this place the insurgent army marched, growing as they proceeded in numbers and boldness. They circulated as they went proclamations under the heads of "Complaints and

WARWICK VISITING KING HENRY VI. IN THE TOWER. (See page 624.)

petitions of the king's faithful commons and true subjects." They complained grievously of the excessive taxation, the debasement of the coin, and the ruin of peaceable people by persecution. They demanded how it was that the king, with the principality of Wales, the duchies of Cornwall, Lancaster, and York, the earldoms of Chester and March, and the lordship of Ireland, could be in such want as to make his government so oppressive? And they answered that it was owing to the horde of "seducious persons" that surrounded him, and enriched themselves on the spoils of the nation. They denounced the whole of the queen's relations as so many traitors, insatiable of the nation's wealth; they charged the old duchess Jacquetta with having by her sorceries bewitched the king; and they demanded that the whole of them should be punished as they deserved. The whole outcry resolved itself into a capital charge against the Wydvilles, and the movement being headed by the Nevilles, there could not be much mystery about the matter. Yet Edward, after advancing as far as Newark, and becoming intimidated by the spirit of disaffection which everywhere prevailed, wrote imploringly to Warwick and Clarence to hasten from Calais to his assistance. The result was such as might have been expected. Warwick and Clarence, instead of complying with the king's urgent entreaty, summoned their friends to meet them at Canterbury on the following Sunday, to proceed with them to the king to lay before him the petitions of the commons.

In this alarming extremity, Edward looked with impatience for the arrival of the earls of Devonshire and Pembroke, who had been mustering forces for his assistance. Devon was at the head of a strong body of archers, and Pembroke of 10,000 Welshmen. They met at Banbury, where the demon of discord divided them in their quest of quarters, and made them forget the critical situation of their sovereign. Pembroke, leaving Devon in possession, advanced to Edgecote. There he came in contact with the insurgents, who falling upon him, deprived as he was of the assistance of Devon's archers, easily routed him. Two thousand of his soldiers are said to have perished; and Pembroke and his brother were taken and put to death, with ten other gentlemen, on the field.

This fatal defeat completely annihilated the hopes of Edward. At the news of it, all his troops stole away from their colours, and his favourites fled for concealment. But the queen's father, earl Rivers, was discovered in the forest of Deane, with his son, Sir John Wydville; and the earl of Devon, late earl Stafford, the queen's brother-in-law, abandoned by his soldiers, was taken at Bridgewater. The whole of them were executed, Rivers and his son Wydville being conveyed to their own neighbourhood, and beheaded at Northampton.

Warwick, Clarence, and Northumberland, who had, no doubt, conducted all these movements from a distance, now appeared as principals on the scene. They marched forward from Canterbury at the head of a powerful force, and overtook Edward at Olney, plunged in despair at the sudden ruin which had surrounded him. They approached him with an air of sympathy and loyal obeisance; and Edward, imposed upon by this, with his usual unguarded anger, upbraided them with being the real authors of his troubles. He very soon perceived his folly, for he found himself, not their commander, but their captive. Warwick dismissed the insurgent army to their homes, who retired laden with booty, and sensible that they had executed all that was expected of them. Under protection of their Kentish troops they then conducted Edward to Warwick castle, and thence, for greater security, to Middleham.

Thus England had at the same time two kings, and both of them captive; Henry in the Tower of London, Edward at Middleham, in Yorkshire. Men now expected nothing less than that Warwick would proclaim Clarence as king, but probably the measures of Warwick and Clarence were deranged by a fresh insurrection which broke out. This time it was the Lancastrians, who seized the opportunity to raise again the banner of Henry. They appeared in the marches of Scotland, under Sir Humphrey Neville, one of the fugitives from the battle of Hexham. Warwick advanced against him in the king's name, but he found that the soldiers refused to fight until they were assured of the king's safety. Warwick was therefore compelled to produce Edward to the army at York. After that they followed him against the Lancastrians, whom they defeated; and, taking their leader, brought him to the king, who ordered his instant execution.

Edward was now permitted to return to London, accompanied by several leaders of the party. There a council of peers was summoned, and then it appeared that though Warwick's faction had probably not accomplished all they had intended, they bound the king to terms which, whilst they neutralised the hopes of Clarence in some degree, still were calculated to add to the greatness of the house of Neville. The king announced that he had proposed to give his daughter, yet only four years old, to George, the son of the earl of Northumberland, and presumptive heir of all the Nevilles. The council gave its unanimous approbation of the measure, and the young nobleman, to raise his name to a level with his affianced bride, was created duke of Bedford.

By council and by arms the ambitious Nevilles had evidently laboured hard to attain the supreme power in the state. They had excited insurrection, colleagued with a prince of the blood, the king's own brother, and even coerced the person of the king. They had struck a severe blow at the rival house of Wydville, and the queen and her mother had paid a severe penalty for their elevation, in the blood of their nearest relatives. But the whole position of affairs was still treacherous and unsound. None of the parties had regard for, or any faith, in the other. It was one universal scene of secret chagrin, hatred, and suppressed revenge. Outwardly, everything was so harmonious that, not only was a general pardon granted for all who had been in any way concerned in the late disturbances, but the king and his reconciled friends were again proposing to invade France in concert with the duke of Burgundy. The French court was so convinced of the reality of this invasion that it commanded a general muster of troops for the 1st of May, 1470.

But the designs of the Nevilles lay nearer home, in reality. The archbishop of York invited the king to meet Clarence and Warwick, at his seat, the Moor, in Hertfordshire. As Edward was washing his hands, preparatory to supper, John Radcliff, afterwards lord Fitzwalter, whispered in his ear that a hundred armed men were on the watch to seize him and convey him to prison. Edward having been once before trepanned by his loving friends, gave instant credence to the information, stole out, mounted a horse, and

rode off to Windsor. This open confession of his opinion of the Nevilles, produced a fresh scene of discord, which with some difficulty was appeased by the king's mother, the duchess of York, and the parties were reconciled with just the same sincerity as before.

The Nevilles were now in too critical a position to pause. They or the king must fall. At any hour some stratagem might surprise them and give the advantage to their injured and deadly enemies, the Wydvilles. Insurrection, therefore, was not long in showing itself again. This time it broke out in Lincolnshire, and, as in the case of the hospital of St. Leonards, appeared to have nothing whatever to do with Warwick or his party. Its ostensible cause was the old grievance of purveyance, and Sir Robert Burgh, one of the purveyors, was attacked, his house burnt down, and himself chased out of the county. Had the cause been really local, there the mischief would have ended; but now again stepped forward a partisan of Warwick, Sir Robert Welles, encouraged the rioters to keep together, to proceed to redress not the evils of one county, but of the nation. He put himself at their head, and they soon amounted to thirty thousand. The king commissioned a number of nobles to raise troops with all speed, and so well did Warwick and Clarence feign loyalty that they were amongst this number.

Edward summoned lord Welles, the father of the insurgent chief, and Sir Thomas Dymoke, the champion, both Lincolnshire men, to the council, in order to obtain information of the extent of the insurrection, and to engage them to exert their influence to check it. But these gentlemen, as if conscious of guilt, fled to sanctuary, but, on a promise of pardon, repaired to court. Edward insisted that lord Welles should command his son to lay down his arms, and disperse his followers, with which order lord Welles complied; but Sir Robert Welles received at the same time letters from Warwick and Clarence, encouraging him to hold out, assuring him that they were on the march to support him. When Edward reached Stamford, bearing lord Welles and Dymoke with him, he found Sir Robert still in arms, and in his anger he wreaked his vengeance on his father, lord Welles, and on Dymoke, beheading them in direct violation of his promise. He then sent a second order to Sir Robert to lay down his arms, but he replied that he scorned to surrender to a man destitute of honour, who had murdered his father. Edward then fell upon the insurgents at Erpingham in Rutlandshire, and made a terrible slaughter of them. The leaders, Welles and Sir Thomas Dolalaunde, were taken and immediately executed. The inferior prisoners, as dupes to the designs of others, were dismissed.

The confessions of Sir Robert and of Dymoke made manifest the treason of Warwick and Clarence. They admitted that the insurrection was their work; that a confidential agent of Clarence regulated all the movements of troops; that the avowed object was to place Clarence on the throne. They had been directed to march into Leicestershire to meet the two heads of the rebellion; but being met by the royal army, and brought prematurely to an engagement, the plans of Warwick and Clarence were defeated. They now advanced towards York, calling on all the people to arm and follow them. But the inhabitants were Lancastrians, and refused to rise in support of any branch of the house of York. The king came within twenty miles of them as they reached Esterfield, and summoned them to appear before him and explain their conduct; but they again altered their course for Lancashire, in the hope that lord Stanley, who had married a sister of Warwick, would join him. In that, however, they were disappointed; and, finding no support in the north, they hastened southward. Edward pursued them briskly. He restored to lord Percy his titles and estates, of which he had been deprived at the battle of Towton, taking them from Warwick's brother, who was again reduced to the empty dignity of lord Montacute. He declared Clarence no longer lieutenant of Ireland, conferring that office on the earl of Worcester.

The disappointed chiefs made a hasty retreat to the south, being proclaimed traitors by the king. At Southampton they attempted to escape to sea in a large vessel of Warwick's called the Trinity, but were attacked and defeated by lord Scales. They were more successful at Dartmouth; and Edward, finding on reaching Exeter that they had escaped him, vented in his savage way his rage on the prisoners taken by lord Scales in the recent engagement. They were delivered to Tiptoff, the earl of Worcester, the new lieutenant of Ireland, to be drawn, hanged, and quartered; and for three weeks such gross indignities were practised on their remains that Tiptoff was thenceforth named "the butcher," and he did not escape his share of the obloquy.

Warwick and Clarence made for Calais. But there Warwick's lieutenant, Vauclerc, a Gascon knight, to whom he had entrusted the care of the city, refused to admit them. When they attempted to enter, the batteries were opened upon them; and when they remonstrated on this strange conduct, Vauclerc sent secretly to inform Warwick that the garrison, aware of what had taken place in England, were ill-affected, and would certainly seize him if he entered; that his only chance of preserving the place for him was to appear at present hostile; and he prayed him to retire till a more favourable opportunity. To Edward, however, Vauclerc sent word that he would hold the town for him as his sovereign against all attempts—for which Edward rewarded him with the government of the place, and the duke of Burgundy added a pension of a thousand crowns. Warwick and Clarence, enraged at this unexpected repulse, sailed along the coast towards Normandy, seizing every Flemish merchantman that fell in their way in revenge to Burgundy, and entered Harfleur, where they were received with all honour by the admiral of France.

Low as were now the fortunes of Warwick and Clarence, decided as had been the failure of their attempts against Edward IV., Louis of France thought he had, in the possession of these great leaders, a means of consolidating a formidable party against Edward, who had treated his alliance with such contempt, and who entered into the closest relations with his most formidable opponent, the duke of Burgundy. He, therefore, received them at Amboise, where he was holding his court, with the most marked honours, and ordered them and their ladies to receive the best accommodations that could be procured in the neighbourhood. He proposed to these two chiefs to coalesce with the Lancastrian party, by which means they would be sure to gain the instant support of all that faction. He sent for queen Margaret, who was then at Angers, and assured her that Providence had at length prepared the certain means of the restoration of king Henry and his family.

Never perhaps was there an attempt made to reconcile persons who had so many causes of imperishable hatred,

who had heaped such injuries on each other. They had imbrued their hands in the blood of each other's nearest relatives; they had pursued each other with the intensest longings for each other's destruction. Margaret had, by the hands of lord Clifford, murdered the brother of Clarence; she had cut off the head of Warwick's father. Warwick had pulled the crown from the head of Margaret's husband, insulted him in his misery, and thrown him into the dungeons of the Tower. He had driven Margaret from the realm, and placed another on the throne of her husband and her son. But the question was not one of love or even internal forgiveness. It was that of mutual interest, and the struggle for crowns; that is, the principle to which all natural feelings, attachments, and resentments, honour and morals, are compelled to give place. The fell and pitiless antagonists of so many years, and so many extraordinary scenes, were suddenly brought together, by the force of a strange current of events, and they smothered their individual sentiments, and consented to unite their efforts to profit by them.

Warwick engaged, by the assistance of Louis and of the Lancastrians, to replace Henry again upon the throne. That was the great concernment of Margaret. By this means Warwick was to depose, and if possible to destroy Edward of York. That was his grand aim, the consummation of his revenge. But in revenge Warwick never forgot the suggestions of a still more dominant passion, that of his ambition. Warwick must, if possible, sit on the throne of England in the persons of his descendants. For this he had married one daughter to Clarence. When the success of Edward had enfeebled his chance, he had succeeded in affiancing his nephew to the daughter of Edward, so that if not a Warwick at least a Neville might reign. He now sacrificed both these hopes to that of placing another daughter on the throne, as the queen of Margaret's son, the prince of Wales. This alliance was the price of Warwick's assistance, and, however bitter might be the necessity, Margaret submitted to it, and the young prince of Wales was forthwith married to Ann, the daughter of Warwick. Warwick then acknowledged Henry as the rightful sovereign of England, and entered into solemn engagements to exert all his power to reinstate and maintain him on the throne. Margaret on her part swore on the holy gospels never to reproach Warwick with the past, but to esteem him as a loyal and faithful subject. Louis, on the completion of this reconciliation, engaged to furnish the means necessary for the expedition.

Edward meantime, having so completely defeated and dispersed his formidable enemies, with his usual want of foresight, disbanded his troops, and gave himself up to his wonted life of pleasure. But on hearing of the extraordinary meeting and negotiations of Warwick and Margaret, of the active agency of the French king, and the proposed marriage of Edward prince of Wales and Ann of Warwick, he sent off a lady of pre-eminent art and address, who belonged to the train of the duchess of Clarence, but who had been by some means left behind. The lady was made to petition for leave to join her mistress, and it was granted with the air of reckless gaiety which was only too natural to the king. The clever dame no sooner reached the court of Clarence than she expressed to him and the duchess her amazement at their permitting such a coalition as the present; that in every point of view it was destructive to their own hopes, and even security; that the continued adhesion of Warwick and Margaret was impossible. Their mutual antipathies were too deeply rooted ever to be eradicated. If they themselves ever could maintain so unnatural a union, their followers, detesting each other from the recollection of old and unpardonable mutual injuries, never would. But should it succeed? What then? The succession of the line of Lancaster was the exclusion and destruction of their own. True, it was stipulated that in case of prince Edward having no male issue, Clarence should succeed. But would the house of Lancaster, once on the throne, ever permit the chance of such a succession? Never. The duke, as a traitor to his own family, would be despised and contemned by all parties, and would be rejected by the nation. If Edward succeeded, what then had Clarence to expect?

Clarence was only one-and-twenty years of age. He was of a slender capacity, easily guided or misguided. These representations filled him with consternation. He was assured that his brother would more than forgive him, he would honour and reward him if he acted in accordance with natural affection, and he agreed, on the first favourable opportunity, to abandon Warwick and go over to the king.

On the other hand, Warwick was as actively and secretly engaged in preparing the defection of partisans of the king in England. His brother, the marquis of Montacute, though he had not deemed it prudent to join Warwick and Clarence in their unfortunate attempt to raise the country against Edward, had been suspected by Edward, and stripped of the earldom of Northumberland. He was still an ostensible adherent of the king, but he was watched. Warwick apprised him of the new and wonderful turn of affairs, and engaged him to keep up a zealous show of loyalty, that his defection at an important moment might tell with the more disastrous effect on the Yorkist cause.

Edward, satisfied with having detached Clarence from Warwick's interests, continued as careless as ever. Yet, who could doubt of the result if Warwick was permitted to land in England? The misfortunes of that popular nobleman seemed to have rekindled all the ancient attachment of the people to him. His fame and princely greatness were sung in ballads all over the land. In every public pageant and dramatic representation allusions to his virtues and his misfortunes were ardently responded to. The thirty thousand persons who were accustomed daily to feast at his palaces in town, and his castles in the country, saw them, with hungry indignation, in the hands of Grays and Wydvilles, whose pride and parsimony made them regarded, even by the nobles and gentry of their own party, as odious upstarts.

The duke of Burgundy, more sagacious than his brother-in-law, the king of England, did all that he could to arouse him to a sense of his danger, and to obstruct the progress of the expedition. He sent ambassadors to Paris to complain of the reception given to the enemies of his brother and ally. He menaced Louis with instant war if he did not desist from aiding and protecting the English traitors. He sent spies to watch the proceedings of Vauclerc, in Calais, and despatched a squadron to make reprisals on the French merchantmen for the seizures made by Warwick, and to blockade the mouth of the Seine. Edward laughed at the fears and precautions of Burgundy. He bade him take no

pains to guard the channel, for that he should enjoy nothing better than to see Warwick venture to set foot in England.

He was not long without that pleasure. A tempest dispersed the Burgundian fleet; and the fleet of Warwick and Clarence, seizing the opportunity, put to sea, crossed the channel, and landed on the 13th of September, 1470, without opposition, at Portsmouth and Dartmouth. Warwick had prepared his own way very skilfully. Edward was deluded by a *ruse* on the part of lord Fitzwalter, the brother-in-law of Warwick, who appeared in arms in Northumberland, as if meditating an insurrection; by which means the unwary king was induced to march towards the north, leaving the southern counties exposed to the invaders. This was the object of Warwick, and, as soon as it was effected, Fitzwalter retreated into Scotland. Meantime, the real danger was growing rapidly in the south. The men of Kent rose in arms; London was thrown into a ferment by a Dr. Goddard preaching at St. Paul's Cross in favour of Henry VI.; and from every quarter people hastened to the standard of Warwick with such eagerness that he speedily found himself at the head of sixty thousand men.

As London and the southern counties appeared safe, Warwick proclaimed Henry, and set out to encounter Edward without delay. He advanced towards Nottingham. Edward, who had taken up his head-quarters at Doncaster, had issued his orders for all who could bear arms to join his banner. They came in slowly; and Edward, who had ridiculed the idea of the return of Warwick, saying Burgundy would take care that he did not cross the sea, was now himself rudely aroused from his fancied security. He was compelled with unequal forces to advance against Warwick. A great battle appeared imminent in the neighbourhood of Nottingham; but the rapid defection of Edward's adherents rendered that unnecessary. The speedy movements of Warwick, and the general demonstration in favour of Henry, had not permitted Clarence to carry into effect his intended transit from Warwick to Edward, when a startling act of desertion occurred to the other side, which completed Edward's ruin. Before Edward could reach Nottingham, and while lying near the river Welland, in Lincolnshire, the marquis of Montacute, Warwick's brother, from whom Edward had taken the earldom of Northumberland, now revenged himself by suddenly marching from York at the head of six thousand men, and in the night, and in full concert with his officers, advanced upon Edward's quarters, his men wearing the red rose instead of the white, and with loud cries of "God bless king Henry!"

The news of this unpleasant event was brought to Edward as he lay in bed by one of his minstrels, and was hourly confirmed by other messengers. Edward commanded his troops to be put in array to meet the traitor; but lord Hastings told him that he had not a regiment that he could rely upon; that nothing was to be thought of but his personal safety, and that on the instant. Accordingly he took to horse with the duke of Gloucester, the earl Rivers, seven or eight other noblemen, and a small troop of the most reliable followers, with whom he rode away. A guard was posted on a neighbouring bridge to prevent the crossing of Warwick, for he also was within a day's march of him; and with all speed Edward and his little band rode on full speed till he reached Lynn, in Norfolk. It is probable that the royal party had made for this small port on the Wash, knowing that some vessels which had brought provisions for the troops still lay there. They found, indeed, a small English ship and two Dutch vessels, on board of which they hurried, and put to sea. Edward, on starting from his quarters, had recommended his army to declare at once for Warwick, as the best means of saving themselves, and of again rejoining his standard when opportunity should offer; for no changes were too wonderful to be hoped for in those strange times.

The fugitives made sail for the coast of Holland, but no sooner had the king escaped from his enemies on land than he fell amongst fresh ones at sea. These were the Easterlings, or mariners of the Hanse-Towns, who were now at war with both France and England. The Easterlings were, at this time, as terrible at sea as the pirates of Algiers were afterwards. They had committed great ravages on the English coasts while the nation was thus engaged in suicidal intestine warfare, and no sooner did they perceive this little fleet than they immediately gave chase. There were eight vessels to Edward's three, and to escape the unequal contest, he ran his vessels aground on the coast of Friesland, near Alkmaar. It was a very fortunate circumstance, amid all these unfortunate ones, that Grautuse the governor of Holland, was at this time at Alkmaar, and he gave the most prompt and kind assistance to the distressed party. The king and his followers were enabled to land, and were hospitably received into the town before the turn of the tide gave the Easterlings opportunity to lay their vessels alongside and board the king's ships.

Edward had fled in such precipitation that neither he nor his followers had any money, or anything but the clothes upon their backs. He could only make some recompense to the captain who brought him over by presenting to him a robe lined with ermine, which he had with him, and promising him an ample payment whenever he regained his throne. Grautuse, however, behaved with the utmost kindness to them, furnishing them with money to reach the Hague, and even such necessary clothing as they required.

The hospitable governor sent an express from the Hague to the duke of Burgundy, announcing the arrival of his royal brother-in-law. But perhaps never was there a more unwelcome guest than this late great king of England. Burgundy was already at war with the cunning and perfidious monarch of France, and he might now expect to have the vengeance of England turned against him for harbouring the rival king. The alternative was forced upon him under these circumstances, of having to maintain the exiled prince and his followers, or of dishonouring himself before all Europe by coldly refusing an asylum to his wife's brother, and to an ally whom he had preferred to Henry VI. What made it the more provoking was that Burgundy had done all in his power to avert the catastrophe. He had sent the thoughtless Edward instant and repeated word of the mischief which was impending. He had apprised him of the powerful alliance forming between France, Warwick, and the queen. He had informed him of the very port at which Warwick meant to land, and though he had himself fitted out a fleet and blockaded the mouth of the Seine, yet he assured Edward that storms might defeat his vigilance, and bade him also put himself in a posture of defence, and be prepared for any emergency. To all this

Edward, with a wild recklessness, had returned only laughter and expressions of contempt towards Warwick. What was still more infatuated, he had chosen the marquis of Montacute and the archbishop of York, Warwick's two brothers, as his chief officer and commander. They were the daily confidants of all those absurdities that he was uttering, and instead of preparing defences and troops, he had gone on with his gallantries, his hunting, and his daily follies, till the bubble of his delusion burst, and he found himself not a king, but a beggar. With what sort of face and feelings must he have appeared before the duke of Burgundy, who had so vainly tried to awake him to a sense of his real position?

To ascertain how Vauclerc, the governor of Calais, was disposed, in case Warwick resolved to attack the duke in his own territories, he sent an envoy to him to sound him. But Vauclerc was one of those political weathercocks, whose whole frame turns upon the pivot of self. He was always the avowed servant of the party in power. He had been put in by Warwick, had turned against him when he fell, and had now turned back, obedient to the breeze that now blew from Lancaster; he would be the friend of Edward if ever the gale should come to him from York again, and not till then. The envoy found all the garrison wearing the red rose. This discovery added to the alarm and chagrin of Burgundy, and while he conceded to Edward a place of refuge, he publicly declared himself the ally, not of this power or that, but of England, avowed himself averse to Edward's designs, and that he might expect no aid from him in endeavouring to recover his crown.

On the other hand, Louis of France was thrown into ecstacies of delight. Louis ordered that processions of the nobles, the clergy, and the principal laity should be made in Paris on three successive days to return thanksgivings to God and the Virgin Mary, for the overthrow of the base usurper, and the glorious restoration of Henry to the throne of England. These processions and rejoicings were spread over all France. He sent for queen Margaret and her son the prince of Wales, who had been living for years totally neglected, and almost forgotten in their poverty, and received her in Paris with the most splendid and expensive pageants and rejoicings. She was entertained with all the honours of a queen of France. He at the same time despatched a splendid embassy to Henry at London, and immediately concluded with him a treaty of peace and commerce for fifteen years. Warwick made a prompt remittance of the sum furnished by Louis for the outfit of the expedition; and though the alert Easterlings seized upon it in its passage, it was proof to the politic king that England meant to be an honourable and active ally.

Warwick and Clarence made their triumphal entry into London on the 6th of October, 1470. Warwick proceeded to the Tower, and brought forth king Henry, who had lain there as their captive for five years. The royal procession which attended the poor king to Westminster, to reinstate him in his palace, presented a strange contrast to that by which he had been led to the Tower. Then, Warwick rode beside him, leading him round the pillory, and crying, "Treason! treason! Behold the traitor!" Now, he proclaimed Henry lawful king, and conducted him with great pomp through the streets of London to the bishop's palace where he resided till the 13th, when he walked in solemn procession, with the crown upon his head, attended by his prelates, nobles, and great officers, to St. Paul's, where solemn thanksgivings were offered up for his restoration.

All this time Clarence was looking on, an immediate spectator of proceedings which pushed him farther from the throne he coveted. To keep him quiet, Warwick heaped every favour but the actual possession of the kingdom upon him. He joined him with himself in the regency which was to continue till the majority of the prince of Wales; he made him lord-lieutenant of Ireland, and conferred upon him all the estates of the house of York. Warwick retained himself the offices of chamberlain of England, governor of Calais, high admiral of the seas; his brother, the archbishop, was continued chancellor; and his other brother, Montacute, returned to the wardenship of the marches.

Warwick summoned a parliament, which, surrounded by his troops and his partisans, of course passed whatever acts he pleased. All these appointments were sanctioned; the treaty with the queen and with France was fully ratified; Edward was declared to be a usurper; he, his children, and adherents, were all attainted; especially Richard, duke of Gloucester. All the former attainders against the Lancastrians, the dukes of Somerset and Exeter, the earls of Richmond, Pembroke, Oxford, and Ormond, were reversed, and every one who had forfeited honours or estates in the cause of Henry was reinstated in them. The crown was settled on Edward, the prince of Wales, and his issue; but that failing, was to devolve upon Clarence.

Queen Margaret might have been expected, from her characteristic energy and rapidity of action, to have been in London nearly as soon as Warwick; but this was not the case. In the first place, she was in want of the necessary funds. Louis, who was chary of his money, probably thought he had done enough in enabling the victorious armament of Warwick to reach England; and poor king René, Margaret's father, was in no condition to assist her. In the meantime all the exiled Lancastrians flocked to her; and all were destitute. In February, 1471, she set sail to cross the Channel, but was driven back by tempests. Three times did she make the daring attempt to cross, though warned against it by the seamen of Harfleur; and every time she was driven back with such fury and damage, that many declared that it was the will of Heaven that she should not pass over; nor was she able to do so till the following March. Till then Warwick held England in the name of Henry, and appeared established, if not exactly on the throne, in the seat of supreme and settled power.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME

INDEX.

NOTE.—*The dates affixed to the names, thus ( ), represent in the case of the English kings the period of the reign, and in other cases include the years during which the persons named figure in this history.*

Acre, siege of (A.D. 1191), 220-221
Adelais, or Alice, queen of Henry I. (1121), 161, 167
—— queen of Louis VII. of France (1160), 183
Agricola, Cnæus Julius, a Roman general (78-84), 13
Alexander II., son of William the Lion (1214-1249), 261, 310
—— III., pope (1160), 183, 185, 195
—— III., king of Scotland (1249-1290), 310
Alexius, emperor of Constantinople (1096-1099) 122, 128, 130
Aldred, archbishop of York (1066), 81, 89, 97
Alfred the Great, youngest son of Ethelwulph (871-901), 29-35
—— brother of Edward the Confessor (1039-1040), 59-62
Almaine, Henry d', son of Richard, king of the Romans (1270), 296
Alphege, or Elphegus, archbishop of Canterbury, murdered by the Danes (1012), 53
Anagni, John of, cardinal, and papal legate (1189), 203
Angles, the, land in Britain (527), 24
Anglesea, island of, or Mona, attacked by the Romans (59-61), 11
Angus, Gilbert of Umfraville, earl of (1291), 314
Anjou, Geoffrey Plantagenet, earl of (1126-1150), 161, 165, 171, 173
Anne, the "good queen" of Richard II. (1382-1394), 416, 420, 426
Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury (1089-1109), 149, 151, 153-154
Arc, Joan of, the maid of Orleans (1429-1431), 574-581
Architecture, Roman, 18
—— Saxon, 70-73
—— Norman, 206-210
—— of the 13th century, 297-309
—— decorated, 463-467
Armagnacs, massacre of (1418), 544-545
Army, pay of in the time of Henry V., 526
Artavelde, Jacob Van, a brewer of Ghent (1338-1345), 370-371, 377
—— Philip Van, son of Jacob (1381-1382), 408, 417-418
Arthur, king, traditions of, 23
—— prince, grandson of Henry II. (1191-1202), 245-249
Art, Saxon, 80-81
—— Norman, 140-148
—— and Literature, progress of in England, 455-459
Assassins, or Haschischi, a tribe of Arabian fanatics, 225
Asser, first bishop of St. Davids, a friend of Alfred the Great, 50
Athelney, isle of, retreat of king Alfred, 31-32
Athelstan, king of Kent (836), 28
—— king, grandson of Alfred (925-940), 36-39
Augustine, St., or Austin, first preached the Gospel in Kent (593), 26
Austria, Leopold, duke of (1191-1193), 225, 230
Azincourt, battle of (1415), 528-534

Bacon, Roger, the philosopher (1214-1292), 459-460
Baliol, Edward, king of Scotland (1314-1344), 364-365, 389
—— John, king of Scotland (1291-1314), 311, 314 317, 320, 323
Ball, John, a preacher of Kent, associate of Wat Tyler (1381), 410-411
Bannockburn, battle of (1313), 345-347
Barbour, John, the Scottish poet (1330-1356), 462
Battle Abbey, founded by William the Conqueror (1066), 88
Bayeux, city of, 24
—— tapestry, account of, 146-148
Beaufort, Henry, cardinal (1419-1447), 552, 562, 571-572, 580, 586, 588
Beaujé, battle of (1420), 554
Beauvais, bishop of (1197), 241-242
Becket, Thomas à, primate of England (1119-1170), 181-192
Bedford, duke of, son of Henry IV. (1414-1435), 525, 540, 557, 563-566, 568, 572, 581, 584-585
Benjamin of Tudela; account of Constantinople (1150 or 1160), 126-127
Belesme, Robert de, earl of Shrewsbury (1101), 153, 155
Berengaria, queen of Richard I. (1190-1192), 218-219, 227
Berwick, massacre of (1296), 317
Bible, translation of into Saxon, 39
—— translation of into English, 418
Boadicea, widow of Prasutagus, king of the Iceni (59-61), 11, 13
Bohemond, prince of Tarentum, a leader of the first Crusade, 128-130
Bolingbroke, Roger, chaplain to Humphrey duke of Gloucester (1441), 587
Born, Bertrand de, a distinguished knight, preceptor of Richard I. (1174-1197), 199, 201, 241
Bouvines, battle of (1214), 256
Brenneville, battle of (1119), 159
Breteuil, Eustace de (1119), 159-160
—— William de, treasurer of William Rufus (1100), 148
Bridgenorth, siege of the castle of (1154), 179
Britain, early history of, 1
—— division into provinces by the Romans, 17
—— principal cities existing in second century, 17
—— division into shires by Alfred, 33
Britons, ancient, 5
Brittany, Conan, duke of (1158-1165), 181-182
Bruce, Robert, lord of Annandale (1286-1304), 310-311, 329
—— king of Scotland (1296-1329), 317, 322-323, 329, 332, 345-347, 358-360, 362
—— David, son of the great Robert (1328-1371), 359, 364-366, 383-384, 393
Buchan, John Comyn, earl of (1294-1305), 317, 323, 329-330
Burgh, Hubert de, regent of England (1203-1232), 249, 270-273
Burgundy, Philip the Good, duke of (1415-1467), 533, 580-581, 584-586, 614, 617
—— Charles the Rash, duke of (1467-1476), 616-617, 622-623
—— duke of, *Jean Sans-peur* (1406-1419), 507-509, 521-524, 537-539, 545, 550

Cæsar, Account of his British expeditions (B.C. 55-54), 5-8
Cade, John or Jack, insurrection of (1450), 594-596
Calais, siege of, by Edward III. (1347), 384-387
Caledonians, or Picts, 2, 15, 16
Camalodunum, 9, 11
Cambridge, university of, 35
Cambridge, foundation of colleges at, 450
Canute the Great (1017-1035), 53-59
Caractacus, the British general (43-50), 9, 10
Carpenters and butchers, battle of, in the Place de Grêve (1413), 521
Cassivelaunus, or Cassibelan, a British leader (54), 8
Catherine, queen of Henry V., and wife of Owen Tudor (1419-1437) 548-554, 556-557, 560, 585-586
Celestine III., pope (1197), 242
Charles IV., king of France, surnamed Le Bel (1322-1328), 351-352
—— V., king of France (1360-1378), 393-396, 404, 407
—— VI., king of France (1378-1422), 407, 485-486
—— VII., king of France (1417-1460), 538, 550-551, 556, 562-563 566, 567, 569, 572-575, 578, 611
"Chalons, the little battle of" (1274), 304
Charter, granted by Ethelwulph to the clergy, 46-49
—— granted by Henry I., 149
—— granted by Stephen, 164
—— the great (Magna Charta), 257

Charter renewed by Henry III. (1244), 282
Chaucer, Geoffrey, the "Father of English poetry," 461-462
Chevy Chase, or Otterbourne, battle of (1388), 425
Chivalry, institution of, 116-117
Christianity, introduction of, into Britain, 16
Church in Britain, history of, from the time of Egbert to the death of Edward the Martyr, 46-50
—— from Ethelred II. to the death of Edward the Confessor, 68-70
Clarence, George, duke of, brother of Edward IV. (1464-1478), 615, 617, 620-621, 622 624
Clarendon, constitutions of (enacted 1164), 185, 188
Claudius, the emperor, his invasion of Britain (43), 9
Clifford, John lord (1460), 605
Cobham, Sir John Oldcastle, lord (1413-1417), 515-516, 518-520
Cobham, Eleanor, wife of Humphrey duke of Gloucester (1441), 587
Coinage, commerce, and shipping, 470-474
Commerce, progress of, 470-474
Comyn, John, earl of Buchan (1264-1305), 317, 323, 329-330
Constantine, the emperor (306-337), 16
—— II., king of Scotland (863-881), 38-39
Constantinople, ancient, description of (in 1159 or 1160), 125-129
Conversano, William, count of (1100), 149
Cornwall, Richard, earl of (1225-1271), 272-274, 278, 281, 284, 296-297
Costume, 89, 141-142, 144-145, 478-480
Creçy, battle of (1346), 380-382
Crusade, account of the first (1096-1100), 119-132
—— the third (1190-1197), 202, 213, 227

Danes in Britain, 28, 29-33, 35, 37-38, 51-59
Danegeld, tax of (instituted 1000), 52
David, king of Scotland, son of Malcolm III. (1124-1153), 165, 199
Dermot M'Murrough, king of Leinster (1140-1170), 194-195
Despenser, Hugh, favourite of Edward II. (1320-1325), 348-353
"Dictum de Kenilworth" (1267), 296
Doomsday Book, account of, 104
Douglas, Archibald, earl of (1402-1424), 491-498, 500, 504, 555, 564, 566
—— Lord James (1307-1331), 344-347, 358-359
—— Sir Archibald, regent of Scotland (1332), 365
—— Sir William, an adherent of Wallace, 321
Druids, 3
Druidical Remains, 4, 5
Dunstan, St., abbot of Glastonbury (945-988), 39, 41, 43-46
Dupplin Moor, battle of (1332), 365

Edgar, brother of king Edwy (958-975), 41-45
—— remarkable Oration delivered by, 45
—— Atheling, grandson of Edmund Ironside, 57, 89, 90, 93, 95, 99, 113
Edinburgh Castle, surprise of (1307), 344
Editha, the "Swan-necked," story of her discovery of the body of Harold (1066), 88
Edmund I. (940-946), 39-4
—— II., surnamed Ironside (1016-1017), 56-57
Edred, brother of Edmund Atheling (946-955), 40-41
Edward I., surnamed Longshanks (1272-1307), 286, 293, 300-336
—— II., surnamed of Caernarvon (1307-1327), 336-357
—— III. (1327-1377), 353, 357-404
—— IV. (1461-1483), 605-624
—— the Martyr (975-979), 45-46
—— the Confessor (1042-1066), 62-68
—— the Black Prince, son of Edward III. (1330-1376), 363, 371, 381-382, 389-390, 392-393, 398-401
—— the Elder, king of Wessex (901-925), 35
Edwy, son of Edmund Atheling (955-958), 41
Egbert, king of Wessex (800-836), 27-28
Eleanor, queen of Henry II., divorced wife of Louis VII. of France (1154-1202), 173, 196, 201, 211, 218-219, 239
—— of Provence, queen of Henry III. (1236), 275, 290
—— queen of Edward I. (1253-1274), 296, 303-304
Elfrida, wife of Edgar the Peaceable (969-975), 46
Elgiva, wife of king Edwy (955-957), 41
Elphegus, or Alphage, archbishop of Canterbury (1012), 53
Elizabeth Wydville, queen of Edward IV. (1464), 615
Emma, queen of Ethelred the Unready (1002), 52, 56, 58. 60
Ethelbald, son of Ethelwulph (857-860), 28
Ethelbert, brother of Ethelbald (860-866), 28
Ethelred I., son of Ethelwulph (866-871), 29
—— II., surnamed the Unready (979-1016), 50-58
Ethelwald, nephew of king Alfred (899-905), 34
Ethelwulph, king of Wessex (836-857), 28
Eustace, prince, son of Stephen (1141-1152), 176
—— count of Boulogne (1051), 63
Evesham, battle of (1265), 293

Falconry, art of, 111, 140-141
Falkirk, first battle of (1298), 323
Fitz-Stephen, captain of the Blanche Nef (1120), 160
Fitzurse, Reginald, one of the murderers of Becket (1170), 189-191
Fitz-Walter, Robert, leader of the barons who obtained Magna Charta from king John (1215), 257
Fortress, Norman, description of, 98
Fortresses built by the Normans, 98
Fulk, earl of Anjou (1107-1126), 157-158, 161

Galgacus, chief of the Caledonians (80), 14
Garter, order of the (instituted 1350), 387
Gascoigne, lord chief justice in the reign of Henry IV. (1405), 502, 510
Gaveston Piers, favourite of Edward II. (1307-1312), 338-342
Geoffrey Plantagenet, son of Fulk of Anjou (1126-1150), 161, 171, 173
—— of Anjou, son of Geoffrey Plantagenet (1156-1158), 173, 179, 181
—— prince, son of Henry II. (1165-1186), 182, 195-197, 201-202
—— natural son of Henry II. (1154-1193), 206, 233
Gilbert of Umfraville, earl of Angus (1291), 314
Glendower, Owen, leader of the Welsh patriots (1400-1416), 490-492, 503, 506-507
Gloucester, Humphrey, duke of (1418-1447), 540, 548, 561-562, 568-569, 572, 581, 585-590
—— Richard de Clare, earl of (1259-1263), 285, 288
—— Gilbert de Clare, earl of (1263-1272), 288, 293, 296
—— Robert, earl of, natural son of Henry I. (1126-1147), 165, 167, 170, 172
—— Thomas Plantagenet, duke of (1385-1396), 422-425, 429-431, 434, 436
Godfrey of Bouillon, first king of Jerusalem (1096-1100), 122-125, 128-131
Godwin, earl (1035-1060), 59, 63-65
Gourdon, Adam, a noted baron, who engaged in single combat with Edward I. (1265), 296
Gower, John, the poet (1324-1372), 462-463
Guy, count of Flanders (1294-1302), 325, 327

Hadrada, Harold, king of Norway (1066), 83
Halidon-hill, battle of (1333), 365-366
Hardicanute (1040-1042), 61-62
Harold Harefoot (1035-1039), 59-60
—— II. (1066), 64, 81-88
Hastings, a Danish chieftain, or Viking (886), 32
Hastings, battle of (1066), 86
Hawking, sport of. *See* Falconry
Helie, lord of La Flèche (1099), 133
Hengist and Horsa, Saxon leaders (449-477), 23
Henry I., son of William I. (1100-1135), 106, 112, 148-162
—— prince, son of king David of Scotland (1138), 166
—— bishop of Winchester, brother of Stephen (1135-1154), 167-170, 179
—— II., surnamed Plantagenet (1154-1189), 162, 172-173, 176-206
—— prince, son of Henry II. (1160-1183), 195, 200-201
—— prince of Tyre, nephew of Richard I. (1192), 226
—— VI., emperor of Germany (1191), 230, 237, 239
—— III. (1216-1272), 267-297
—— IV., surnamed Bolingbroke (1399-1413), 431, 434-438, 440-443, 481-514
—— V., surnamed of Monmouth (1413-1422), 492, 503, 510, 512
—— VI., surnamed of Windsor (1422-1461), 556
Hereford, Humphrey Bohun, earl of (1297), 323
Hereward, "the last hero of Saxon independence" (1069-1072), 95, 99

Hexham, battle of (1464), 612
Holland, Sir John, half-brother of Richard II. *See* Huntingdon
Homildon-hill, battle of (1402), 496
Hospitallers, or Knights of St. John, account of, 132
Hotspur. *See* Percy
Huntingdon, John Holland, earl of (1384-1400), 420, 429, 484

Innocent II., pope (1135), 164
—— IV., pope (1245), 280-281
Interdict proclaimed upon the kingdom (1208), 251
—— in the reign of Stephen, 172
Ireland, early history of, 194
—— conquest of, by Henry II. (1169-1172), 194-195
Isaac, emperor of Cyprus (1199), 220
Isabella, wife of Hugh count of La Marche (1200), 248
—— queen of Edward II. (1308-1330), 338, 351-352, 363
—— queen of Richard II. (1399-1408), 484-485, 490-491, 507-508
—— queen of Charles VI. of France (1417-1435), 538-539, 544-548, 556, 585

Jacqueline of Bavaria, wife of the duke of Brabant (1425), 567-569
Jacquerie, origin of the (1358), 394
Jaffa, battle of (1192), 227
James I., king of Scotland (1402-1435), 501, 554, 565-566
Jerusalem taken in the first Crusade (1099), 131
—— re-taken by the Mahometans (1187), 202
Jew of Bristol tortured by king John (1211), 251
Jews, persecutions of, by Edward I. (1290), 314-315
—— persecutions of, by king John (1215), 261
Joachim, abbot of Curacio (1190), 218
Joan of Sicily, sister of Richard I. (1198-1199), 214-217, 219, 227
John, king (1199-1216), 195, 237-239, 244-265
John I., king of France (1348-1364), 388-390, 392-393, 395
Judith, niece of William the Conqueror (1070-1075), 100-101
Juliana, natural daughter of Henry I. (1120), 159-160

Lancaster, John of Gaunt, duke of (1370-1386), 399-401, 405-406, 416-417, 420, 422
Lancaster, Thomas Plantagenet, earl of (1308-1312), 339-341
Langton, Stephen, archbishop of Canterbury (1207-1213), 250, 255
Lanfranc, archbishop of Canterbury (1068-1089), 82, 110
Leicester, Simon de Montfort, earl of (1253-1265), 284-294
Lewes, battle of (1264), 292
Literature, science, and art among the Saxons, 80-81
—— science, and art among the Normans, 134-138
—— science and art, progress of, in England, 455-459
Llewellyn, prince of Wales (1270-1282), 289-290, 305-308
Lollards, the, or Reformers, 428, 518-520, 540
London in the reign of Henry II., 200
Longchamp, William, chancellor in the reign of Richard I., 224, 232-237
Longbeard, "the king of the poor" (1195-1196), 239-240
Louis the Dauphin, son of Charles VI. (1413-1415), 521-524
—— VI., king of France (1112-1128), 157-159, 161
—— VII., king of France (1137-1180), 165, 173-175, 181-183, 188, 191, 196, 199, 202
—— VIII., king of France (1216-1225), 262-263, 268-272
—— IX., king of France (1225-1266), 279, 287, 300-302
—— XI., king of France (1460-1470), 611, 616-617, 621, 624

Magna Charta, signed June 15th, 1215, 257
—— principal clauses of, 260
Malcolm, II., king of Scotland (1003-1033), 59
—— III., surnamed Caenmore (1057-1093) 93, 113
Manny, Sir Walter, a noted general under Edward III. (1341-1347) 375-376, 384-387
March, Agnes, countess of (1336), 368
Marche, La, Hugh, count of (1200), 248
Margaret, queen of Malcolm Caenmore (1068-1093), 93
—— of Anjou, queen of Henry VI. (1444-1482), 587-588, 597, 605, 610-614, 621-624
Massacre of the Jews at the coronation of Richard I. (1189), 212
—— at York (1190), 231-232
Matilda, or Maud, queen of Henry I. (1100-1118), 149, 151, 155, 157
—— queen of Henry V. of Germany (1110-1147), 158, 161, 165, 167-172
—— or Maud, queen of Stephen (1135-1151), 169-170
Maudelain, chaplain of Richard II. (1400), 484-485, 488
Minstrels and troubadours, 137
Montferrat, Conrad of, prince of Tyre (1191-1192), 221, 225
Montacute, lord (1330), 363
Montfort, John de, nephew of John III., duke of Brittany (1341-1347), 374, 377
Montfort, Simon de, earl of Leicester. *See* Leicester
—— son of (1264-1270), 293, 295, 296
Mortimer, Roger, lord (1316-1330), 351, 357, 362-363
Mortimer's hole, Nottingham castle, 363

Neville's Cross, battle of (1346), 383-384
New Forest in Hampshire cleared by William the Conqueror, 104
Norfolk, Thomas Mowbray, duke of (1386-1399), 434-435
Northallerton, battle of (battle of the Standard) (1138), 166
Northumberland, Henry Percy, earl of (1399-1408), 482-483, 496, 500, 506
—— Morcar, earl of (1066-1087), 67-68, 83, 91, 93
—— Robert de Mowbray, earl of (1095-1125), 114, 116
—— John Nevil, earl of (1469-1471), 618, 620
Norman Conquest, effect of on English civilisation, &c.; manners and customs, progress of literature and art, &c., 134-148
—— clergy, condition of, after the Conquest, 184
Normans, landing of, in England (1066), 83

Odo, archbishop of Canterbury (901), 50
—— bishop of Bayeux (1066-1088), 82, 92, 100, 105, 107, 110
Olaus, king of Norway (991), 51
Oldcastle, Sir John, lord Cobham, the original of "Sir John Falstaff." *See* Cobham
Orleans, duke of, brother of Charles VI. (1406-1407), 507-508
—— Charles, duke of (1407), 508-509, 521-524, 533, 540
—— siege of (1429), 575-578
Otterbourne, or "Chevy Chase," battle of (1388), 425
Oxford, University of, 34
—— foundation of colleges at, 458

Pandulph, legate of the pope, 253-254
Paper, materials anciently employed in making of, 135
Parliament, the "wonderful" (1388), 423-424
Paris, Matthew, the historian (1235-1259), 460
Patrick, St., converted the Irish to Christianity (422-432), 26
Pedro IV., surnamed the Cruel, king of Castile (1360-1368), 396, 398
Pembroke, William, earl of, 268-270
—— Richard de Clare, earl of, surnamed Strongbow (1167-1171), 194-195
Percy, Henry, surnamed Hotspur (1402-1403), 494, 498-500
Peter the Hermit, a preacher of the first crusade (1096-1100), 118-121
Peter's pence, tax of, 27
Philip II., king of France (1180-1216), 202, 213, 221, 236 237, 239 241, 248, 250, 252, 255
—— III., king of France, surnamed Le Bel (1290-1303), 315, 326 327
—— VI., king of France (1328-1348), 369-370, 371, 383
—— the Good, duke of Burgundy (1418-1467), 550-552, 555, 557-568, 614, 616
Philippa, queen of Edward III. (1327-1347), 360, 383-384, 386
Phillpot, John, an alderman of London, gained a victory over a Spanish fleet (1378), 407
Picts, or Caledonians, 2, 15, 16
Plague, ravages of, in the reign of Edward III., 387
—— ravages of, in the reign of Henry IV., 506
Poictiers, battle of (1357), 392
Pole, Michael de la, chancellor of Richard II. (1385-1387), 422-423, 424
Progress of the Nation.—Formation of the English people, 444
—— The constitution and the laws, 448
—— Power of the church, 452
—— Literature, science, and art, 455

Progress of the Nation.—Architecture, 463
—— Sculpture and painting, 467
—— Music, 467
—— Commerce, coinage, and shipping, 470
—— Manners and customs, &c., 472
Pudsey, Hugh, bishop of Durham, 213, 232-233

Ralph, surnamed de Flambard (1089), 110, 114
Rees ap Griffith, king of South Wales (1164), 188
Richard I., surnamed Cœur-de-Lion (1189-1199), 195-197, 200-203, 205, 210-244
—— II. (1377-1398), 404-443
Robert of Normandy, eldest son of William I. (1077-1135), 102, 112, 116, 149, 156
—— II., king of Scotland, grandson of Robert Bruce (1371-1390), 393
—— III., king of Scotland (1390-1406), 489, 492, 501
Robin Hood and the outlaws of Sherwood (1195), 238
Roger, bishop of Sarum, chancellor of Henry I. (1135-1139), 152, 166-167
Roman architecture, 18
Romans, narrative of their occupation of Britain, 5-17
Rothsay, David, eldest son of Robert III. of Scotland, 492, 494
Rosamond Clifford, her history, 206
Roses, origin of the wars of the, 597
Rouen, siege of (1418-1419), 542-545
Rutland, earl of, slain by Lord Clifford (1460), 605

Saladin, Sultan, his wars with the Crusaders (1190-1192), 220-227
Salisbury, William Longspear, earl of (1213), 254
—— Richard Nevil, earl of (1453-1460), 599-605
Saxon heptarchy, 24
—— architecture, 70-73
—— manners, customs, and laws of, 73-81
—— Chronicle, quoted, 106-107
—— and Norman civilisation, customs, progress of literature and art, &c., 134-148
Saxons, landing of in Britain (449), 23
Sawtre, William, the first English martyr burnt (1401), 514
Scotus, Duns, a moral philosopher, 460
Scotus, Johannes, preceptor of Alfred, 50
Scots, origin of, 16
Scotland, condition of, (in 1338), 368
Shrewsbury, battle of (1403), 497-498
Shrewsbury, Sir John Talbot, earl of (1452-1460), 592, 604
Sigismund, king of the Romans (1416), 536-538
Silures, the; Caractacus their leader (43-50), 9, 10
Siward, earl of Northumberland (1050-1055), 63-64
Society, review of, in the middle ages, 265-267
Sluys, battle of (1340), 372
Somerset, Edmund de Beaufort, earl of (1439-1454), 586, 589, 591, 598, 599, 600
—— Henry de Beaufort, duke of (1454-1464), 603, 605, 609, 612
Standard, battle of the (Northallerton), (1138), 166
Stephen, grandson of William I. (1135-1154), 162-176
Stigand, primate of England (1066), 89, 95
Stirling, battle of (1297), 321-322
Stonehenge, ancient Druidical temple, 4
Suetonius, Paulinus, the Roman governor (59-61), 11, 13
Suffolk, Michael de la Pole, earl of, favourite of Richard II., 419 422, 424
—— William de la Pole, first duke of (1428-1450), 573, 578, 588, 590-594
Surrey, John Plantagenet, earl of (earl Warrenne), (1264-1290), 290, 292, 315, 318, 320
Sweyn, son of earl Godwin (1032), 59, 63
—— king of Denmark (991-1012), 51-54
Sybilla, wife of Robert of Normandy (1100), 149

Talbot, Sir John, earl of Shrewsbury (1452-1453), 592
Tancred, grandson of the great Ruggiero, king of Sicily (1189-1190), 128-130, 214-215
Templars, Knights, account of, 132
Tenchebray, battle of (1105), 155-156
Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury (1141-1161), 172-173, 183-184
Tin and lead brought from the Cassiterides, 2
Torture practised by the Normans in the reign of Stephen, 171
—— of the Jew of Bristol by king John (1211), 251
Tortures practised by the soldiers of king John (1215), 261
Tostig, brother of Harold II. (1043-1066), 64, 67-68, 83
Tournelles, assault of the, by Joan of Arc (1429), 576-578
Towton, battle of (1461), 609
Tracy, William, one of the murderers of Becket (1170), 189
Trade. *See* Commerce
Tudela, Benjamin de, account of Constantinople (in 1159 or 1160), 125-129
Tudor Owen, husband of queen Catherine, widow of Henry V. (1437-1461), 585, 606
Tyler, Wat or Walter, the (1381), 411-414
Tyrrell, Sir Walter, shot William Rufus (1100), 134

Urban II., pope (1095-1098), 118-119
Ursini, cardinal, and legate of the pope (1418), 543

Vespasian, a Roman general (43), 9, 13
Vortigern, the British king (441-449), 23

Walcher, bishop of Durham (1080), 101
Wallace, William, the Scottish hero (1297-1305), 320-323, 328-329
Walter, "the Penniless," a preacher of the First Crusade, 119
Walthuf, earl of Huntingdon (1074), 100
Warrenne, earl. *See* Surrey
Warwick, Richard Nevil, the great earl (1453-1470), 599-610, 612-624
Wessex, Saxon kings of, 26
William I., the Conqueror (1066-1087), 65, 81-106.
—— II., Rufus (1087-1100), 107-116, 133-134
—— of Normandy, son of duke Robert (1110-1128), 157-158, 161
—— Prince, son of Henry I., lost in the Blanche Nef (1120), 160
—— II., surnamed the Good, king of Sicily (1180-1189), 214-216
—— I., king of Scotland, surnamed the Lion (1165-1214), 310
Witenagemot, or Saxon Council of State, 76
Wycliffe, John, the Reformer (1324-1384), 401, 408, 418-419
York, Richard Plantagenet, duke of (1450-1461), 597-605

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